



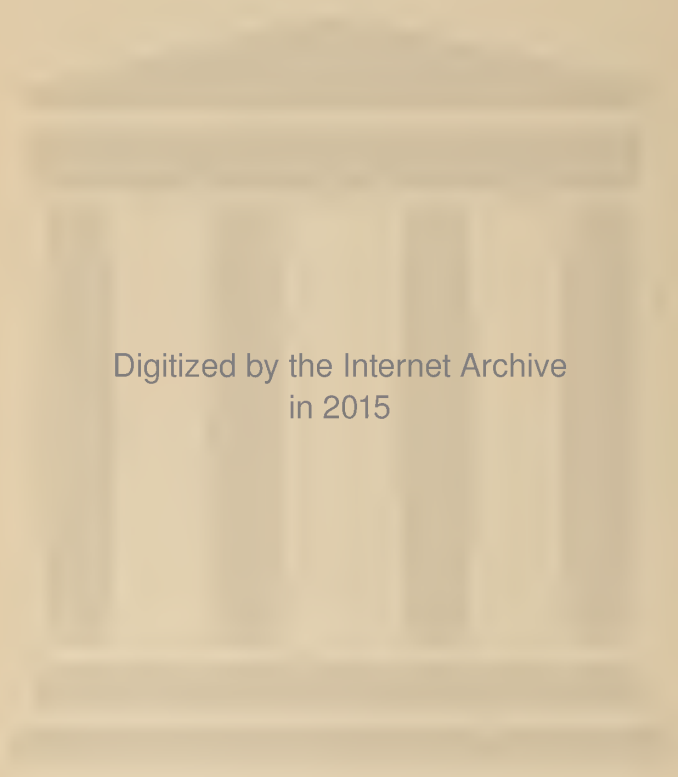
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CAMP AND TRAMP IN
AFRICAN WILDS



MARISAKA, A SOUTHERN BAMBALA WOMAN

All Southern Bambala are painted completely red; their clothes, hair, ornamental strings and beads, all are dyed with red-coloured ferruginous clay. They are so fond of this colour that they paint with it any present they offer to a stranger. The coiffure is elaborate, and has to last for a long time. The band across the forehead is composed of a string made of plant fibre.

CAMP AND TRAMP IN AFRICAN WILDS

A Record of Adventure, Impressions, and Experiences
during many years spent among the Savage Tribes
round Lake Tanganyika and in Central Africa,
with a description of Native Life,
Character, and Customs

✓ BY
E. TORDAY

Member of the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Member
of the Council of the Folk-Lore Society, &c.



With 45 Illustrations & a Map

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1913

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CAMP AND TRAMP IN AFRICAN WILDS

CHAPTER I

A typical resident—Disillusioned—A gruesome warning—Hippo steak—Adventure with a python—Bound for Stanleyville—A plucky Bangala—The Ngombe—Arabian influence—Ladies in pawn—Skilful navigation—The crocodiles' opportunity—The Kimputu bug—Native heroism—Arab cruelties—Lake Tanganyika.

IT is my intention to give here an account of my adventures and experiences from 1900 to 1907 in the Congo. My sojourn in the country was uninterrupted with the exception of one short interval of a few months. Some portions of the book were written as far back as 1907, but owing to the embittered controversy that was then waging concerning the Congo, I thought it wiser not to publish it. But now things have calmed down, and I hope it will be possible to write about that country without raising a storm of indignation in either camp. I shall abstain from giving my opinion concerning such controversial matters as the land question or free trade, and shall restrict my narrative to facts that have come under my personal observation, leaving it to the reader to draw his conclusions. I do not expect him to

A TYPICAL RESIDENT

take an interest in me personally; I want him to see in me a typical resident in the Congo, like many another, going through fits of depression relieved by periods of exuberant joyfulness; despising the "savage" at first and then learning to know, esteem, and love him.

Chapters I and II will deal briefly with the incidents of my first journey. I kept no diary, so the reader must understand that only the most striking incidents are recorded; although the period dealt with extended over four years, during a time when certain parts of the country visited were decidedly unsettled, the narrative is condensed into two chapters, whereas the shorter journey of two and a half years will occupy the rest of the book.

These four years of apprenticeship have, I hope, enabled me to gain a better knowledge of the country and its inhabitants, and have caused me later on to show some discernment when called to action. Everybody likes to laugh at the "greenhorn," and it is a very salutary exercise to recall one's own adventures on first entering the African bush; it makes one feel so much more leniently towards others. The *ideal* traveller has no adventures; he tries to and knows how to avoid them, for if the white man gets into a scrape, it is generally his own fault and not that of the native. Of course it may occur that the wrong person is called on to pay for the follies of another, but even then the man of experience and judgment can get out of the difficulty without trouble worth recording.

DISILLUSIONED

I need hardly say that when I landed at Boma, the capital of the then Independent Congo Free State, in March 1900, I was greatly disappointed, for how rarely does reality respond to the pictures of our imagination. I expected a "Treasure Island," but instead of this I found, on a pestiferous swamp, a town where the white man's battle against the deadly microbes had not yet begun; the blessings of civilisation were absent, yet all the glory of the wilderness had disappeared. There was no decent hotel available, yet camping out was out of the question. After some searching inquiries, a Portuguese told me that he could spare me a bed in his wooden shanty if I did not mind sharing the room with another man; having no choice I accepted his offer. The rest of the day was spent in running after my luggage, paying visits, and filling in all sorts of official documents. It was dark when I reached "home," and when trying to get to the entrance, I sank knee deep into the swamp on the edge of which the "Hotel Leopold" stood. I was shown into my room. On a bed there I saw a man, tall and thin, with hollow eyes, sunken cheeks, and parched lips. He moaned and moaned when, suddenly becoming aware of my presence, he addressed me in Swedish. I told him I could not understand, and he then tried German. He asked me, "Are you new to this country?" "I am." He sat up in his bed and stared at me with a look of horror. Then he spoke. "Look at me. A year ago I was a *man*. I stood six

A GRUESOME WARNING

feet two in my stockings. Now I am nearly a corpse, and cannot stand at all. When I came to this country a year ago I was twenty-six years of age, now I am an old and broken-down man, with no hope in this world. I was as strong as a bull. Look at me. I cannot lift my hand to my mouth. All that remains for me to do is to try and die like a man. Don't stay in this country! Get away now while it is still possible. Get away if you don't want to be like myself in a year or so. If you have a mother whom you love tear yourself from this accursed country. Go away. Don't you hear? Go back to Europe." Then with a yell he jumped from his bed, and, dragging himself to my feet, lifting his folded hands he moaned: "Go back, sonny, go back." He then fainted. I called for help; he was put on his bed, and the landlord told me that he was dying from an abscess on the liver. The next morning he was gone to a better land. This was my first impression of the Congo.

The next day I went up to Matadi and thence by rail to Kinshasa.

I stayed here about six months and underwent my first attacks of malaria. At Kinshasa European food could only be obtained at exorbitant prices, and no native food was available. All sorts of devices were tried in order to get fresh food; each European went out on alternative nights in a dug-out on Stanley Pool to shoot hippopotami. The flesh of these animals has a *repulsive* fishy taste, but it was considered a great delicacy by men who



A CHIEF OF A BAPOTO TRIBE

I have been told that the scarring of the face is child's play compared to the painful operation of making the scars on the lips; neither boy nor girl, however, would like to be without them.

HIPPO STEAK

were accustomed to tinned food. The supply soon gave out, for the hippo, not choosing to be shot at, retired some few miles distant, and after that there were no more "hippo à la mode" or hippo steaks for us. A lean fowl cost between three and five francs, and all one got for this money was insufficient for a healthy breakfast. At one time some of us formed an "egg combine," and sent Bateke traders up the river to buy eggs for us; then again we got some goats sent down from the Kasai or some cattle sent up from the coast; but we were generally in a continuous state of semi-starvation. There was much drinking going on at that time, and although a bottle of beer cost three francs, enormous quantities were consumed. Some of us founded a (manuscript) newspaper called *Le Petit Leopoldvillain*; the subscription was a case (forty-eight bottles) of beer per annum; this was drunk by the editorial staff. I really think we were a miserable lot, and even our gaiety had a bitter taste.

Taking into account the scarcity of food it can easily be imagined what a shock I received one morning on being informed by my Sierra Leone clerk that a python had entered my fowl-house and was feasting on the two or three ducks I possessed. I jumped out of my bed and rushed to that building; as it had no windows I was in absolute darkness. The clerk brought me a candle and we entered together. At first nothing was visible; after a hearty meal the snake had retired to a corner

ADVENTURE WITH A PYTHON

and was fast asleep. Roused by the noise we made, it lifted its head and hissed; this was too much for the clerk; he dropped the candle, rushed out of the fowl-house, banged and locked the door on me and screamed out: "Don't let him come after me!" then ran away. Well, it is not pleasant to be locked up in a dark place with a snake fifteen feet long. I *saw* the snake lashing its head right and left, and coming nearer and nearer to me; I seemed to feel its breath near my face, and expected every moment to be touched by its villainous fangs. Then I heard footsteps, the door was burst open—and there lay the snake sound asleep; I now know that it had never really moved, and that it was my imagination that had played me false. The natives who had come lit a torch and the snake was soon despatched. Then I went in search of the clerk, and we had a little conversation which had an epilogue in the Police Court, where I was fined £2 and 32 shillings costs; well, I am sure it was worth the money.

I think if I had stayed long in Kinshasa I should have no tale to tell; I got anæmic and weak to such an extent that I was unable to keep awake for any length of time; I fell asleep at all times of the day, and even my eyesight began to fail. Not that Kinshasa is an exceptionally unhealthy place; but the want of decent food before being acclimatised was too much for me. My chance came in September 1900. I was offered a post at the other end of the Belgian Congo, near Lake Moeru, and I accepted

BOUND FOR STANLEYVILLE

it with joy. I did not mind where I went so long as I got away from Kinshasa.

On the 13th of that month I started on the steamer *Hainaut* bound for Stanleyville. Now anybody looking at the map may ask what I was going to do there if I wanted to get to Lake Moeru; it looks like going from London to Dover via York. At that time the Kasai district, at any rate the south-eastern part of it, was in a state of great turmoil; the revolted Batetela soldiers and some native chiefs made the place so hot that it was quite impossible for any European to pass. To get to the lakes the only safe way was up the Congo and through the Manyema, and this was the route I had to follow. For twenty days I travelled on the steamer, and for twenty days the banks showed a continuous stretch of forest land. I wish I had the gift of describing the grandeur of the country, the majestic river and the many strange people I saw. After leaving Stanley Pool I noticed how the last traces of European civilisation were left behind; the natives became more and more scantily dressed until finally, at any rate for the fair sex, all garments completely disappeared. What impressed me most were the curious cicatrisations that distinguished the members of one tribe from those of another. In the equator district the Bangala have the skin on their foreheads raised with cicatrices over an inch high, which look like cockscombs. Most of the ship's crew consisted of these Bangala, and I have not the slightest doubt that we all owed our lives to a

A PLUCKY BANGALA

member of this tribe. We were approaching Bumba, where the river is about twenty-five miles wide; the water is very shallow and there are a great number of islands. The natives here are extremely hostile to the white man, and this seems to have been the case for many years afterwards, for even in 1907, I think, a steamer, the *Bruxellesville*, came to grief here, and her whole crew and all her passengers were massacred and eaten by them. We were then miles away from any place where we could with safety have effected a landing, when suddenly there was a great stir and we were informed that the powder-magazine, containing tons of gun-powder and some dynamite, was on fire. Our gallant Danish skipper at once tried to enter it, but was driven back by the smoke. Then a Bangala, a stoker, came forward, and, taking a bucket of water, descended into the hold. We gave him up as lost, but he soon appeared with the empty bucket and, gasping for breath, asked for more water. A chain was formed and the brave fellow went up and down with his bucket; the steam was escaping from the hold, which showed that he had not been any too soon. When the fire was completely extinguished the poor chap was almost exhausted; however, he soon recovered, and then he was generously awarded sixteen yards of cotton cloth! It was not that we did not want to do better for him, but, everyone of us being only allowed a very small amount of luggage, we had nothing more to spare. We were going up river with the intention of staying in the



WAGENYA PADDLERS

They belong to a typical tribe of fishermen, a tribe where all work which is not connected directly or indirectly with fishing is performed by women. No man would carry a load; if he is asked to transport some of your luggage, he will undertake to do so, and then send his wife or wives to perform the task. On the other hand, they are ideal paddlers, and fatigue and fear seem to be unknown to them.

THE NGOMBE

backwoods for years, and we really had nothing with us but what was absolutely necessary.

At that time very little anthropological research had been carried out in this country, and the natives from inland were usually referred to by the people from the riverside, and consequently by the Europeans, as "Ngombe," which really means bush-men. Their appearance was certainly such as to inspire little confidence, their faces being considerably disfigured by cicatrices, without which no Ngombe would think himself presentable. All the tribes in this neighbourhood are cannibals, and their enemies knew that if they fell into their hands they would be treated with the utmost cruelty. In later years I met with some very decent fellows of these tribes, men for whom I had a great liking and considerable esteem, but then being a new-comer and not understanding them, I looked upon them as half savages.

If I describe the Ngombe as ill-looking, what shall I say about the natives I met further up-river near Basoko? Here the lip-plug is in general use; at an early age a small hole is pierced in the upper lip, and this, by the insertion of ever-increasing wooden disks, is so extended that it finally measures over 2 inches in diameter. If one considers furthermore that these people were cannibals and did not try to conceal it, it is easy to understand that a new-comer could regard them with little sympathy. If, however, one lives some time among them, one gets accustomed to their want of dress and weird ornamentation, and one comes at last to

ARABIAN INFLUENCE

think them rather becoming. How often have I not heard Europeans quarrel over the respective merits of the tribe they were best acquainted with, and I have found that, when I have referred to the pelele (the lip plug) with disgust, older residents in the country have been quite hurt in their feelings.

Stanleyville was a curious mixture of an Arab-European Negro town. Whatever harm the Arabs may have done to the natives, and there is no doubt that in their slave-raiding expeditions they have slaughtered them by thousands, they certainly have taught them many a good thing. It was the Arabs who introduced rice, Madagascar potatoes, beans, and many useful plants; they have taught the natives cleanliness, and have established a school in nearly every centre. Thus the Arab part of Stanleyville could not fail to impress me most favourably, and I must say that many of the "Arabised" natives I met with were decidedly pleasant people.

When I left Leopoldville I had been told that all I might require during my overland journey would be supplied to me at Stanleyville; now I found that the residents themselves were short of supplies, and I could only obtain a very small portion of the stores usually provided for so long a journey. To begin with there were neither camp-beds nor tents to be had, and as for food I got four pounds of flour, some sugar and tea, a few tins of preserves, and a generous supply of pickles; these were expected to last four months. I need not say that

LADIES IN PAWN

the residents of Stanleyville were not fond of this latter delicacy. I crossed the river under the famous Falls in a canoe, and then my luggage was carted by men to a place above the Falls where another boat was waiting for me. The boat was only a dug-out, but was immense in size and very comfortable indeed. I had forty paddlers provided, but the first day no paddles were used, the boat being propelled by means of poles like a punt; and a real pleasure it was to travel like this, for we made astonishingly rapid progress. I lodged in a native hut, my boxes serving instead of a bed. The third day the men took to paddling, and excellent paddlers they were too. At every village the crew was changed, thus the people were never taken far from their homes. In one place only the men refused to do the work; had I known more about them I am sure I could have persuaded them to do it, but as it was, the men of the previous village having returned, I was in a pretty plight. The women alone were in the village, and the men, standing at some distance, were mocking me. I instructed my boy to put a number of paddles which were lying about into the boat, and then I invited the ladies to get into it by proposing to buy some food from them. Now, under all circumstances, negroes are keen to do business, and soon I had about thirty women in the boat trying to sell me odds and ends. Without attracting their attention my boy undid the rope by which the boat was fastened to a tree, and before they were aware of what was happening

LADIES IN PAWN

the women found themselves floating down mid-stream. The effect of this manœuvre was immediate; the men set out in their little canoes and claimed their women back. I declared that for every man who came into the boat I would release a woman, and half an hour later I was triumphantly continuing my journey, all the ladies having been taken out of pawn. I am far from thinking that what I did was right, but then my case was a desperate one, and I had to employ desperate remedies.

He who has not travelled with Wagenya paddlers does not know what paddlers can do. These fine men will go on for many hours, singing cheerfully and showing no sign of fatigue. Near Sendwe they got me up the rapids, fighting the current inch by inch. To see those stalwart men, every muscle of their bodies at its highest tension, the paddles bending under their efforts forcing the boat upwards, was a sight for every lover of sport and athletic beauty. When we reached the village above the rapids I asked them if they would mind taking me down the rapids in one of their small boats. At first they did not like the idea, pointing out to me how they would get into trouble if I got drowned; but when I gave them a paper acquitting them of all responsibility (these people have still the greatest respect for that mysterious thing, a scrawling) they were satisfied, so we set out. We started slowly, I and four men. Three of them sat behind me, and one stood in front at the bow of the boat. They paddled on slowly and leisurely



A PYTHON

Pythons are very common in the Congo. They sometimes reach twenty-five feet in length and can swallow a whole goat, or, as in the case depicted, a pig. No case, however, has come to my knowledge of a child having been killed by them. When a snake has been killed by the natives, they make him disgorge his prey and eat it as well as the snake.

SKILFUL NAVIGATION

until we got into the current, then their strokes grew more and more rapid. The speed seemed tremendous to me and was increased more and more. When about four or five hundred yards from the Falls the men jumped up and sang a wild song, the three behind paddled furiously, while the man at the bow stood like a bronze statue, motionless, his paddle in the water and looking in front. I could now no longer see the water distinctly; it looked like a uniform grey sheet, while the very banks of the river seemed to fly by. In front of us there appeared a rock which seemed to bar our way, and, slashing the water with their paddles, the men yelled furiously with excitement. The rock was at a hundred yards, eighty, sixty, ten . . . the man in front made a sudden move, round whirled the boat, and I felt, although I could see nothing, that we had passed very close to something, and then we were in smooth water again. I think those seconds were the most glorious of my life, and it came as a revelation to me that these negroes, for whom I had had the contempt that many a civilised man feels towards savages, were giants as compared to me, and from that moment my heart went out to them. I do not mean to say that I was aware of this sentiment at once; all I really felt was the admiration that no man can withhold from the strong and the brave; and as with women pity is often the first step on the path to love, with men admiration leads to sympathy and friendship.

THE CROCODILES' OPPORTUNITY

After about two weeks we left the forest country and came into grassy land. Tired of forced inactivity, I used to leave the boat and, barefooted, wade along the banks, hoping to get a shot at some water-fowl. I never thought of the crocodiles; I am afraid these latter neglected a brilliant opportunity there. Apart from this danger, what I did was extremely foolish, and it certainly did not improve my general state of health, which was not very brilliant, even without such follies.

Some weeks later I reached Kasongo, having passed Nyangwe of Livingstonian fame. I visited the old Arab town and was received with great hospitality by Abibu Ben Selim, one of the few Arabs who, submitting to new conditions, had remained in the once flourishing Settlement. At Kasongo the Government was erecting a fort at very considerable expense; what this fort was intended for I never could understand. I do not think there was any danger of a rising or of a return of the Arabs, and as for other possible foes I fail to see from whence they were to come. Was it against a European power? In that case it was surely useless, as all supplies could have been stopped by blockading the mouth of the Congo.

It was my good fortune to meet here Monsieur Malfeyt, the Governor of the Province; he kindly gave me a bed and some supplies of European food, of which I was sorely in need. He had just returned from a successful expedition against the revolted soldiers and, I am sure, had very little to

THE KIMPUTU BUG

spare, but whatever was possible he certainly did for me, and I fear that he ran the risk of running short himself in order to help me. He told me that some of the natives called him Kimputu, because he used to try and cheer up people who supposed themselves to be suffering from a disease known to the natives by that name. They pretended that if they were bitten by a certain bug of this name they fell ill, and that then the only thing left for them to do was to die. Now this was attributed largely to auto-suggestion, and by pointing out how ridiculous it was to suppose that this one little parasite could kill such big men, it was hoped that people would fight it instead of "giving in." Monsieur Malfeyt, in whom the natives had more confidence than in any other European, and of whom they were very fond, tried to use his influence for this purpose, but with little good result, I am afraid.¹

After a few days rest I started on my overland journey towards Tanganyika, my porters encouraging me by singing: "Tanganyika bâli!" (Tanganyika is far away). To be sure so it was. As I could not procure a tent I had to camp in the native villages, and had to ask for the loan of a hut. The second night when in my bed I felt an unpleasant itching, and, getting up, I found five Kimputu sticking to me. Now was my chance, I

¹ Since then the late Dr. Todd of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine has studied the disease and has named it tick fever. In most cases it is fatal.

THE KIMPUTU BUG

thought, so I called all the men and showed them the insects still sticking to me, saying: "Now, here is your famous Kimputu; you see that I have been bitten, and you will see that they can't do me any harm." But the men were incredulous, shook their heads, and said: "Poor Bwana Deke, you will see your country no more. Poor Bwana Deke!" From that day they considered me as sentenced to death. Sometimes at night (my nights began at that time to be very restless) I heard them talking about me as if I were actually dead, and when one day I asked a man to sell me his knife, promising to pay him for it when I reached the Lake, he said, with a sympathetic smile: "I do not think that you will ever see Tanganyika, Bwana Deke, but you can have the knife for all that."

It was not long before I began to feel out of sorts, and soon I could scarcely drag myself along. We reached Kabambare, and here I dismissed my porters. This place was the centre of the famous Manyema, the place of many battles, alternately the stronghold of the Belgians and the Arabs, and the end of an imaginary telegraphic line. I do not know what the line may be like now, but when I passed through the country there were only traces of it to be seen. These traces consisted of trees felled across the road, and of copper wire ornaments round the necks of the natives. For days I walked through forests of Borassus palms, and it was pleasant to see how these natural telegraph



THE LIP-PLUG

The pelele, or lip-plug, is one of the weirdest ornaments one can imagine; it is found in Africa as well as in America. Among the people near the mouth of the Lomami River both sexes adorn themselves in this way; the fashion is beginning to disappear, and it is a curious sign of conservatism that, although the people have abandoned it, they still continue to perforate the upper lip, a very painful operation indeed.

NATIVE HEROISM

poles had been felled and replaced by sticks, which rotted away in a few months. I had known the telegraphic line between Leopoldville and the Equator at the time when it was always kept in order by a skilled staff, even under the most trying circumstances, so that the condition in which I found this line filled me with astonishment. I suppose that the fact of its being so far away from the seat of government had made control difficult, and some one had taken advantage of this.

The whole time I travelled in the Manyema I met with traces of recent wars. When arriving at a village, the chief would come and show me his "mukanda" or certificate; some of these recorded extraordinary acts of heroism and loyalty. One man had his feet burnt off by the Arabs in order to extort information of the whereabouts of the white man and his forces, but no torture could induce him to betray his allies. Another had been hanged by his beard on the branch of a tree and had had his lips cut off, but still he remained faithful to his friends. All these certificates were signed by the commanders of the Belgian troops, and the wounds and mutilations of the chiefs proved them to be genuine. Let those who doubt the negroes' valour go from Kasongo to Tanganyika; they will find ample proofs of their devotion. I am proud to have shaken hands with these obscure heroes whose deeds surpass anything that Mucius Scaevola may have done.

These were not the only traces of Arab cruelty; they and the Tamba Tamba (Arabised chiefs so called

ARAB CRUELITIES

because they adopted the Arab costume called by this name, consisting of a wide white shirt) had a summary way of dealing with evildoers: the calumniator had his lips cut off, the thief his hand removed, the disobedient slave his ears torn off, and the runaway slave his feet amputated. I met with many of these, and one man I saw at Kabambare was an excellent example of how ineffectively punishment serves its purpose. The man had been an habitual thief and the Arabs had cut off both his hands and feet, and he was furthermore mutilated in a terrible way. The European living in Kabambare took pity on the poor wretch who could only crawl about, and as he was on the verge of starvation (the natives not desiring to have anything to do with so disreputable a character) he invented a job for him and made him the guardian of his fowl-house. I do not know how he managed to do it, but at any rate he did steal the few chickens that were in it!

By this time I got worse and worse, and the daily march became a terrible ordeal to me. My kind good boy, Makoba, who I am sure had a very bad time with his ill-tempered master, used to walk near me, and whenever I broke down cheered me on and made me try again. There, under the scalding sun, with fever burning me, I had to go on, tramp, tramp, tramp; how often did I try to escape his well-meant attentions and lose him so that I might die quietly in the bush! The cunning I displayed to obtain my object was worthy of a Red Indian. I sent him away with useless messages and then rushed off for the

LAKE TANGANYIKA

bush ; I there hid carefully, hoping I would be left at last to die. I had no pain, but I was so tired ! But Makoba stuck to me, and no prayer or menace could persuade him to leave me alone. How I hated him ! What authority had he to oblige me to go on when all I wanted was rest ? Had I no right to get it ? On and on he drove me. Stages which the carriers covered in four or five hours took us twelve and fifteen, but he always managed to get me to the village at the end.

One day when we reached the top of a hill the men burst out into a joyful cry : “ Tanganyika ! ” At first all that I saw was a straight vertical wall of a greyish dim colour at a great distance off, when suddenly the sun broke out among the clouds and the wall turned into a huge glittering sheet of water. So it proved not to be true that I should never see the glorious lake ? My head began to whirl round and round, and I should have fallen had not Makoba sustained me. “ Come, master, let us go to Tanganyika ! ” Two days later we reached the lake.

The fact of having accomplished a thing I never hoped to do caused a wholesome reaction, and I felt a man once more. As luck would have it, an English steamer, the *Cecil Rhodes*, called at the place a day or two later, and the kind manager of the Cape to Cairo telegraphic line offered me and a magistrate, bound for the same destination as myself, a free passage to Pala, the Mission of the White Fathers. Will this kind man forgive me if I tell him that, although I shall never forget his kindness, I have

LAKE TANGANYIKA

forgotten his name? All I know is that never have I experienced greater kindness and never was I more in need of it.

My recollection of Lake Tanganyika is so mixed up with the dreams of a fevered brain that I will not attempt to give a description of it. I know it was dark, dark blue and lovely to behold, and that its waves rocked me into quiet sleep such as I had not enjoyed for a long time. The dear steamer, the *Cecil Rhodes*, now lies at the bottom of this beautiful, but treacherous mass of sapphire blue, and as I write the magic word "Tanganyika," I am longing, longing to be back to your shores again, O Mirror of the Sun. What the Arab says of the well of the desert is true for you: whoever has drank the waters of Tanganyika shall all his life long to drink them again.

CHAPTER II

Pala—Among friends—The White Fathers—Recuperation—A nocturnal visitor—Lions and leopards—A fine monument—Narrow escapes—Domestic pets—The fly belt—The man-eating habit—Big game—African fauna—An unpleasant situation—The call of the wild—A black knight.

TWO days later, I was dosing on deck when suddenly a voice said, "There is Pala !" I looked up and thought I must still be dreaming, for a landscape such as one is accustomed to associate with the Rhine lay before me. Soft hills, covered with what seemed to me to be vineyards, and on the top of a steep rock a lovely castle. But all this was real, and what I saw was the oldest Roman Catholic Mission in the Congo.

I little know what happened afterwards ; I remember that I was put to bed by kind hands and that I had a long, long dream. I dreamt that I was surrounded by love and happiness, and love and happiness were not abstract ideas, but real things that one could touch and which caressed me. I am sure that was all my dream, and although it seemed to last long it was always the same and always pleasant. At last my shadowy visitors became fainter and fainter, and finally they disappeared. I opened my eyes and saw people moving about. I lay in a room, a real room, that had windows with real glass panes, over which hung real white curtains. Before

AMONG FRIENDS

I could ask where I was a man leaned over me and said that I must not speak on any account. He told me that I was at Pala, that I had been very ill and had been unconscious for several days, that the speaker was Father Spee, who had nursed me into life again. Father Spee seemed to me to make huge efforts when speaking; then I realised that I was nearly deaf, and that the kind man was shouting for all he was worth.

Misfortune often brings one in contact with one's real friends, and during my illness I received more generous kindness than I have ever before experienced. The whole convent seemed to exist only for the purpose of making life pleasant to me. Friar cook prepared the daintiest dishes, Friar gardener brought me the sweetest and rarest fruit, and the other Fathers and Friars came in turn to keep me company, to read to me or to have a quiet chat. My hearing improved greatly in a few days, and on Christmas Day I was allowed to leave my room and dine in the refectory. It took some time before I quite realised where I was; I flattered myself that I was living a real romance, that I was a crusader, and had been attended to by the Templars in one of their convents. The talk I had with some of them rather confirmed my illusion than otherwise, and so did their appearance. They were all tall, strong men, and wore, like all members of their order, long white dresses, their only ornament being a black rosary; their heads were covered with red Turkish woollen caps, such as are called "fez." They looked as if they could

AMONG FRIENDS

fight just as well as preach, and there were several among them who had taken an active part in repelling the Arabs. They talked with pleasure of these old times.

There was a dear old Friar Francis, one of the first to come to this country, who told me of the life in the fortress, for such is Pala, when an attack was expected; how the spoons were melted down to make bullets, how the children were drilled, and what excitement prevailed when the dhows of the enemy were seen coming over the lake. He talked of Captain Joubert, a French officer who was in command, how he used to mount the walls to survey the enemy's position, how his hat was shot off his head, and how, exclaiming: "*Celâ me fait tant d'effet que de souffler dans un violon!*" he shot at and killed his assailant. Alas, how few of those who escaped the bullets escaped the effects of the climate! The Superior, Father Huys, my special chum, Father Faes, dear Father Francis, and many more are dead.

When I was well enough to move on, the Fathers lent me a boat, which took me to St. Louis, where I met Captain Joubert, for over twenty years a resident in the country. He then sent me on to Baudouinville, where I met the Bishop, Mgr. Roelens, the chief of the order. I may here mention that the White Fathers take great care to avoid the mistakes that missionaries so often make; their chief aim is to keep the natives on the land, and to prevent them from becoming boys and clerks, &c. They do

THE WHITE FATHERS

not teach them any European language. The teaching is done in the *Swahali* language, and when the children leave school they are induced to settle as farmers in one of the many villages founded by the Fathers. These villages have an elected chief, and are to a great extent autonomous; they are visited regularly by priests who, apart from religious instruction, teach the natives all that a prosperous farmer ought to know. The produce of the farms is sold to the different towns on both shores of the lake, and the people are doing extremely well.

I am afraid that, for reasons unknown to me, I enjoy the reputation of having a strong feeling against missionaries; this is not so, but I do think that the African native has my first consideration, and I feel that the greatest mistake which is made by them, is to take him from the land and create new wants in him, when there are no means of satisfying them. I have met missionaries of all creeds and think highly of many of them; I do not wish to cast the slightest doubt on their good intentions even when I doubt their wisdom. I believe that the White Fathers have discovered the right way; when a native leaves their school he is a Christian, knows how to read and write, and has learned how to put his patch of land to the greatest possible advantage. But in other respects he is just like the other natives; he is encouraged to respect native laws and old customs as well as the white man's law; he lives like the other natives in his native land and is governed in native fashion. He compares with the *products* of Lusambo



A TYPICAL WOMAN FROM THE TRIBE OF ZAPPO ZAP

The more the traveller goes eastward, the more refined the features of the natives become, in some specimens one finds very few of the characteristics usually attributed to negroes. The black colour, so common on the West Coast, is replaced by a soft chocolate-brown, which in certain individuals merges into dark yellow. Kasai people speak of the inhabitants of the Lower Congo as "black negroes."

RECUPERATION

and Luebo civilisation as a farmer in Yorkshire compares with a London ne'er-do-well.

At Baudouinville I had a relapse, and Makoba told me that there was no escaping from "Kimputu." I got a little better and continued my journey overland, but on the second day I fell in the bush and could rise no more. I was carried to Lusaka, and again was put right by the White Fathers there. But my few days' journey to Pweto, on Lake Moeru, caused a serious relapse, and I remained ill for several months. I will not trouble my reader with a further description of my sufferings; it is enough to say that on one occasion it was thought necessary to prepare a coffin for me, and that when I rose after my illness I had to go through the task of learning to walk.

Slowly but steadily I recovered my strength, and June found me as fit as I had ever been in my life. Now a great time of enjoyment came for me. My official position was really only a formal one; all I was expected to do was to be in the Katanga as a sign of occupation; I was a sort of broker's man. As the "Comité Spécial du Katanga" really looked after the administration, I had very little to say and still less to do, so I could indulge freely in my hobbies. I took to collecting birds and to big game shooting, and spent weeks roaming over the country.

The first journey I undertook was a journey of piety, which concerned one of the heroes of my boyhood. When Livingstone had been on the southern bank of Lake Tanganyika he mentioned on his map a

A NOCTURNAL VISITOR

certain Cape Akalonga ; at the fixing of the frontiers between British Central Africa and the Congo State this was taken as the point where the southern frontier began. But when the officials went to find it, they reported that there was no such Cape at all. Now I *knew* that Livingstone could not have made such a mistake, and I was keen to prove that he had not, so off I went in search of the lost Cape.

On my way I camped one night on the banks of the Luzubi, when Makoba came to ask me if he could go and wash in the river ; his request granted, off he went. I was sitting there quietly when I heard an awful shriek : “ Bwana angoo, Bwana angoo.” I knew it was Makoba. The cry was repeated from a greater distance, then farther away. I jumped up, snatched my rifle, called to the men to follow me, and rushed to the river. At first I could see nothing, but soon I observed traces of blood, and when examining the soil I found the footprints of a leopard. The writhing on the sand revealed that Makoba had been knocked over and dragged into the water. Holding my rifle over my head I swam across ; the man soon found the spoor again, and we followed. However, darkness overtook us and we had to return. I would not own myself beaten, and the next morning after a sleepless night we continued our search. At about eight o'clock we found what was left of my faithful companion ; the head had been torn off and half the shoulder had been devoured by the leopard. I ambushed, but the whole day passed without a sign of the foe. At last, when I thought I should have to give it up because of the

LIONS AND LEOPARDS

darkness, the beast arrived and a bullet from an express rifle avenged Makoba.

Although lions are more troublesome than leopards in the Katanga, the latter take a considerable toll of the weaker part of the population; they usually attack women or children. I heard of an Englishman who was there for the mining company, who lost his life through one of these pests. He had gone out to shoot some fowl when he found himself face to face with a leopard. He had no choice, so he poured the contents of both the barrels of his shot gun into the animal. Severely wounded, the leopard sprang at him and knocked him down, inflicting terrible wounds on his left arm. The man tried to get at his hunting knife, but whenever he made the slightest movement the leopard, which was lying on him, mauled him furiously. After some time, however, his foe became weaker, and, taking advantage of this, the Englishman succeeded in drawing his knife and finished him. When the rescuing party, sent out to search for him, came up, he was lying there, with the leopard still covering him (he had not the strength to shake him off), trying with his sound hand to roll a cigarette. Two hours later he died from loss of blood.

When I reached Tanganyika again, my first inquiries were for the Cape, but nobody seemed to know about it. Then I asked if there was a man who had known Livingstone; I was shown an elder who had done so. At first he was reluctant to give me any information at all, but when he found out that I was a great admirer of the great explorer he grew

A FINE MONUMENT

friendly and praised him to the skies. I then told him that some people doubted his friend's (Livingstone's) word because he had said there was a Cape Akalonga, and no one could now find it. "He never lied ; come and see," was his answer. He then led me to a small mountain a couple of hundred yards or so from the shore. "Look at the soil," he said, and it was evident that the lake had once come to the foot of the mountain. This, the man told me, had been still the case when Livingstone had visited the country, and further inquiry confirmed this fact. Livingstone's memory is still cherished by all who knew him, and thus his own acts alone have erected the finest monument that any traveller can boast of.

Having satisfied my curiosity concerning the Cape I went off on a little ramble amongst the Marungu mountains. We were rising continually, and soon my half-naked carriers began to feel the cold keenly. This increased to such an extent that some of them became quite down-hearted, and would have remained behind if it had not been for the lions and still more for the great number of elephants we continually encountered : apparently the men would not have minded the risk of losing their way, but they did not care to be devoured by lions or to be trampled upon by elephants. I quite realised this feeling when one night I was wakened by the snorting of these giants near my tent ; they were feeding in the immediate proximity of my camp. It was no use trying to frighten them away ; for in the stampede that would have followed there would have been just as good a

NARROW ESCAPES

chance of their running over us as before, so we simply let things be, but I need not say that none of us had any sleep. As a matter of fact our fear was quite unjustified, for as I now know, the elephant never harms people or their houses without provocation. I have often seen the track of an elephant stop at the place where the animal must have beheld a house or even a tent, and invariably the animal turned away from it and made a careful circuit. One night I was awakened by a cry, "Simba, Simba!" (lion), so I seized my rifle and rushed out. It was pitch dark. My fox-terrier had followed me. I saw nothing, and returned to my tent, when I missed my dog. I made a torch of dry grass and went out and whistled for him; no answer. Then I observed a dark spot on the ground; it was blood. My dog had been taken by the lion not more than two yards away from the spot where I had been standing.

On another occasion a lion entered our camp, and one of my men fired a muzzle-loader in the air to frighten him. When the men came with torches we found a roan antelope, freshly killed by the lion, lying in the middle of the camp; it had been dragged there and dropped when the shot scared its captor away.

A pleasanter incident occurred when we got high up in the hills; I found ripe blackberries. I asked the men if they were edible, as I was afraid of being deceived by mere resemblance; they told me that women did eat them, but they were not fit food for men. I thought otherwise and enjoyed them thoroughly. During all our journeys in these mountains we could

DOMESTIC PETS

see at a distance a high mountain, shaped like a regular cube; I was told that this consisted of highly magnetic metal ore, and this information was confirmed by Father Van Acker, a great mountaineer, who had climbed every mountain in the neighbourhood.

On my way back I stopped at Kisabi and did some shooting. The game there was so abundant that if I left my camp at about half-past five in the morning I was usually back before seven, having shot an antelope or a buffalo. At the request of the natives I sat up in the plantations for three nights and bagged two rhinoceros and a wart hog. I bought there two leopard cubs for a pair of old rubber shoes, and a pair of black serval kittens for two yards of calico. The former turned out charming pets in time, but I could do nothing with the latter. Although they were still blind when I got them, and I brought them up with the bottle, they never ceased to be savage brutes. When I went to feed them they would crawl down and wait until I turned my back; then they would hit out savagely after my legs. They soon found out that the length of their chain prevented them from harming passers-by, so they would lie for hours in a corner and wait, and if an unfortunate person came within their reach would scratch or bite him savagely. Finally I had to destroy them, as they became really dangerous. The leopards, on the other hand, were just like kittens, and there was no reason for keeping them on chains. They slept in my room, and ran about free to go wherever they liked. They were perfectly harmless.

THE FLY BELT

At Kisabi, too, I could hear at night the roar of the lion; it usually began before sunset, and seldom lasted very late. The natives taught me to distinguish between the different cries: thus a short cry, pause, a longer cry, pause, and then a very long and violent cry followed by a sound like distant thunder (this always seemed to me to make the very earth tremble), meant that his lordship was out a-hunting; a long wailing cry indicated that he called for his mate or for the cubs. I think in its proper surroundings the roar of the lion is grand music.

In my time Pweto was outside the fly belt, and we kept cattle, and our herd increased splendidly. Lions never came near the place, and the hyenas whose howling we heard every night could not, or dared not, enter the kraal. Our donkeys slept in the open, and one night a hyena made an attempt to carry off a foal; but it had gone to the wrong address, for next morning we found it with its brain knocked out by the donkeys. In 1907 I was informed that the tsetse fly had invaded Pweto and that all cattle had been destroyed; sleeping sickness too had made its appearance. Lions also had come, and such was their number and their impudence that the sentries posted at night had to take guard on the roofs of the houses, and several were killed. This roaming habit of the lion was also observed by my friend, Count F. de Grunne; he told me that at Kanda Kanda lions were practically unknown in 1907, and in 1908 they became an absolute danger.

What lions will do when they get into man-eating

THE MAN-EATING HABIT

habits I experienced on a river called Lukumbi. Coming home from one of my rambles I reached a village situated near the river. I could not understand why the natives should receive me with such unusual rejoicing; I was then told that eight man-eating lions had taken residence near this place, and that they had killed several persons. They became at last so impudent that they would come at night to the village, leap over the fires which were kept up all round it, and, jumping on the thatched roof of a hut, would break it by their weight and carry off the unfortunate occupant. Now the natives expected me to shoot them all. I had just prepared for dinner when this account was given me; the boy came along with my soup tureen, a highly treasured piece of crockery, when there resounded the well-known "Whuuuua" of the king of animals; smash went the tureen, and the boy disappeared in a hut from which neither threats nor cajolery could get him out again. So I had to serve my dinner myself. After lighting fires round the camp and arranging with the natives to go after the enemy the next morning, I went to bed. I slept soundly until I was awakened by Sanga, my little dog, who, shivering and trembling, was trying to crawl underneath my blanket, giving painful little whines. I got up, took my rifle, and carefully opened the door of the hut. When my eyes got accustomed to the light of the full moon, I saw just behind the fire a greyish mass, and finally I distinguished the glittering eye of a beast of prey. I carefully returned to the hut and fastened a piece of



A CUNNING RASCAL

Zappo Zap, with some of his wives and retinue. Having been for many years an ally of the Arabs, Zappo Zap has adopted all their vices and none of their qualities. An exceedingly cunning rascal, he has always managed to turn his coat at the right time so as to avoid punishment for his crimes. He is said to have over three hundred wives.

BIG GAME

paper to the front of my barrel, so as to be able to aim in the semi-darkness; then kneeling and resting my rifle on the doorstep, which was about a foot high, I took careful aim and fired. The shot roused the whole camp and was followed by general confusion. My eye still on the spot where I had seen the animal, I waited; nothing moved. Then I went nearer; the little dog, howling with fear, walked in front of me. She was afraid, but she knew her duty did Sanga, and never flinched. Nearer and nearer we came, and there lay a fine lion stone dead. I sat up for several nights after this but did not even hear a roar, so I left the place for home.

I was not long at Pweto before the "Wanderlust" took me again; this time I intended to follow the Congo which leaves Lake Moeru near Pweto. After the first day's march I reached a country which can justly be called the hunter's paradise. It consists of park land; herds of antelopes crossed the path in the early morning. Hartebeest, M'Pala, Sable, Pongo, and Roan antelopes, waterbuck, bushbock, wart hogs, and red-river hogs, one had just to decide what one wanted for lunch and it was to be had for very little trouble indeed. Herds of black buffalo and zebras were met with every day, and the path was frequently marked with the spoor of lions and leopards. I had a very unpleasant adventure with a solitary black buffalo which cost a man's life. I was walking along a native track followed by one of the men, when I heard him scream, and, turning round, I saw him tossed in the air by a bull. Before I could shoulder

BIG GAME

the rifle he was down, and the buffalo trampled on him furiously. I fired, the bull fell on his knee, and a second shot finished him. He was one of the solitary bulls that sometimes are driven away from the herd by a younger rival; he must have been an ill-tempered rogue, for one of his great horns was partially broken, probably in a fight. The injured man never recovered, and after a few days' suffering died.

At a village called Mweka I made arrangements for a longer halt; I had good reports that elands could be got near there, and it was my ambition to secure a trophy. It took me several days to get in view of a herd; I met all sorts of game, but having made up my mind to get an eland, I paid no attention to anything else. My efforts were crowned with success after about a week. If I mention this it is to point out that, in my opinion, it would be quite possible to tame these beautiful creatures, and make use of them where cattle cannot exist. The Katanga is a country which in time will become a "white man's land," and although the discovery of the gold mines may retard its progress, there is no doubt that it has a great future. European cattle succumb to the fly, but this is not the case with elands. It is remarkable that our primitive ancestors were able to domesticate so many animals, whereas within historical times we have never done so. Even the black buffalo may be put to use, and the zebras, as I know from personal experience, are easily tamed; although useless for the saddle, in harness they might do well enough.

AFRICAN FAUNA

All these animals seem to diminish in numbers ; why, I cannot explain. The simple presence of the white man is certainly not the reason for it, for in Pweto, where we made it a strict rule that no animal should be shot within a mile of the settlement, antelopes freely grazed within a few hundred yards of the houses. Even the firing on the exercise ground did not seem to alarm them ; I have seen during target practice two redbucks graze a few steps from the target. If any attempt is to be made to domesticate the considerable number of African animals which promise success, it is high time that it should be done before it is too late. The destruction by the natives during their hunting expeditions when they set the bush on fire is enormous ; for not only males, but females and calves are destroyed in terrible numbers. The reserves established in Africa are of little use so long as the wholesale slaughter of game by the natives is permitted. It is no good arguing that the white man has no right to impose restrictions on them in their own country ; the country belongs as much to animals as to man.

Next I turned my steps to the South and made a pilgrimage to Lake Banweulu, usually called Bangwelo. When coming back, being completely out of touch with current events, I decided to travel in the direction of Lake Kisale. Mokandu Bantu, the son of M'Siri, the famous former King of the Katanga, gave me a number of porters, and more or less aimlessly I travelled right and left. Months had passed since I had left Pweto, so I had not

AN UNPLEASANT SITUATION

heard that the Batetela ex-soldiers had shown activity again, and that an expedition was in pursuit of them. Soon, however, I found traces of their passage, and I gathered information from the natives that I had put myself between them and the Portuguese frontier, whither the mutineers were retreating. I was in a most unpleasant position. I could go nowhere without the risk of meeting them, and I had not a single armed man with me; they were sure to make no difference between combatants and non-combatants, and should I fall into their hands I was sure of my fate. I spoke about it to the Bayekke porters and asked them if they would stand by me. They told me that they could not well do otherwise; their chief had confided me to them, and they would never dare to show themselves before him without bringing me safely home. I vividly remember waking one night and, going out of my tent, finding two of these men standing near it, armed with improvised spears; they explained to me that they were watching over my safety and that they had done so every night! We proceeded with the greatest caution, avoiding making fires at night, and so finally crossed the danger zone and reached home safely. It was at the beginning of this journey that I met Mr. George Grey, who later fell a victim to a lion. He was a great favourite with all who met him, and blacks and whites alike had only praise for him. A keen sportsman, we enjoyed some fine shooting together, and I had an opportunity of admiring his great personal courage,

THE CALL OF THE WILD

when one day he waded into the water and with a stick drove off a crocodile who had hold of a woman's arm. I think I may tell this tale now that he is dead; if he were still alive I am sure he would have resented the mentioning of what he considered a trifling incident.

In 1904 my appointment came to an end and I started on my journey home. I had not the slightest desire to see Europe again, and if it had been possible I would have stayed on for the rest of my life. I hesitated for some time, and if I had had to return by the same way I had come I think I would have gone "Fanti" and stayed there for ever. But the route through the Kasai had been opened by this time, and I had heard so much of this beautiful country that the desire to see it overweighed the wish to stay, so I was *en route* again.

It will give the reader a good idea of the changed conditions in the Lomani country, which I had to cross, if I relate the following incident. I came to a village one night, and the natives seemed rather sulky and did not show any of the ordinary signs of friendliness. During the night a great deal of drumming was going on, and in the morning I found that the attitude of the villagers had radically changed; food was provided, and the chief, who had not shown himself the night before, came with a rich present requesting me to stay a few days in the place. I soon learned from my men the reason for this pleasant change. During the night the

THE CALL OF THE WILD

villagers had been informed that another much more powerful chief was going to attack them, and they knew that as long as they had a European as a guest their enemy would not begin any hostilities. I was without escort, but a white man was a white man with troops or without, and the authority of the State was so well established that his presence made hostilities impossible. I inquired of the chief if he could count on any allies to come to his help if I stayed longer; he had to answer in the negative. Did he hope that if I stayed on longer the attack might be abandoned? He could not say he did. Finding that my stay would be of no real use, I left the villagers to their fate.

Now, after four years' residence I ought to have known better, and this shows clearly how long it takes to learn to act in the right way in a strange country. What I really ought to have done was to go to the menacing chief and through my influence bring about a peaceful arrangement of the differences that existed between the two villages; I am sure now that this would have been quite possible. I never heard what happened after I left, and, to be quite frank, I do not like to think of it.

Before reaching Lusambo, where I was to take a steamer for Stanley Pool, I met with one of the most remarkable adventurers, remarkable even in this country where the violent changes of the last twenty years had favoured the rise of many black knights of fortune. This man was Zappo Zap. Congo Lutete was one of the first chiefs in the

A BLACK KNIGHT

Eastern Congo who had recognised Arab rule and, as their ally, built up a big kingdom, the provinces of which were ruled by chiefs who recognised his suzerainty. Among these was Pania Mutumbu, who had as his head-man Zappo Zap. This man distinguished himself in his slave-raiding expeditions and finally became himself independent, and was one of the most bloodthirsty and cruel auxiliaries of the Arabs. When he saw that things were against them he turned traitor and sided with the Europeans. He had always been successful in siding with the victors, and up to this day has retained his chieftainship. I do not think it wise that this should be so, as I consider him the greatest scoundrel unchanged, a man whom the French would describe as “pêcheur dans l'eau trouble.” He is very rich and very powerful, and has always succeeded in making money out of other people's misfortunes. His harem is one of the grandest in the Congo, and he never travels without a huge company of wives and followers. I do not think that he has finished yet, and hope he will be found out by the Government before more serious harm has been done. I know on the best authority that he was responsible for the rising of the Bushongo; when he saw that it would be unsuccessful he turned against them, and his brigands committed most of the depredations attributed to the Bushongo.

From Lusambo I descended by steamer to Stanley Pool; the country traversed has been brilliantly described by Mr. Hilton Simpson in his *Land and People of the Kasai*, so I will say nothing about it.

A BLACK KNIGHT

From there I went down by rail and returned by the Belgian mail boat to Europe. I soon, however, got tired of civilisation, and it was then that I started on my second journey, which will cover the remaining part of these pages.

CHAPTER III

Travel in the Congo—Uncomfortable quarters—Insect pests—The key of the Upper Congo—Old friends—A pernicious habit—A novel method of barter—A deposed monarch—An amusing incident—Cooks and their ways—Cannibalism—A case for arbitration—Native legal methods—A bond against bloodshed—A distinguished guest.

LEAVING Southampton on February 11, 1905, on an Elder Dempster boat, I proceeded to the mouth of the Congo; but I will not weary the reader with details of the voyage which has been described too often to possess much interest. My railway journey from Matadi to Leopoldville may likewise be dismissed in a few words; it suffices to say that for a journey of less than 250 miles two whole days are required; and this was in many respects the most trying part of all my travels, for the carriages have springs which serve no practical purpose, and the gauge of the railway is only 2 feet 6 inches, the result being that the traveller is as well shaken up as if he were a bottle of medicine. We broke the journey for the night at Tumba. I was happy enough to secure a lodging in a so-called hotel. Most of the hotels in Tumba consisted at that time of buildings constructed of old boxes; the best room, 10 feet by 10, was luxuriously furnished with an iron wash-stand, a trestle bedstead, a mosquito net, and, as *table de nuit*, an empty box, which, if

UNCOMFORTABLE QUARTERS

the scent was not unusually deceptive, had contained salt fish.

There were several indications that the hotel was prosperous and frequented by numerous travellers ; innumerable stumps of burnt-down candles adhered to the fish-box, many corpses garnished the mosquito net and, as the blood-stains clearly indicated, they must have fleshed their weapons of offence on their hapless victims before they fell on their *champ d'honneur*. The mosquito is the most dangerous animal in Africa ; you can defend yourself against the lion, snakes flee before the approach of man, crocodiles are quite inoffensive on land, but the mosquito displays in his warfare against the human race an energy worthy of a better cause.

In justice to the hotel I must add that the mosquitoes were not the only domestic animals in the room. Cockroaches, some two inches long, bobbed against my face, enormous spiders crept out of the crevices, and regiments of jiggers seemed to lie in wait on the floor for an opportunity of ensconcing themselves beneath my toe-nails.

After adding to the collection of corpses on the mosquito net, I rose from a sleepless couch and summoned the chambermaid to bring me some water. A drowsy negress made her appearance, brought me about a pint of the necessary liquid, and reminded me in broken French that she expected to be rewarded by *matabiche* (a tip) for the great trouble to which I had put her.

On the return journey all this was changed ;

INSECT PESTS

Tumba had been transformed to Thysville, where very decent quarters could be obtained at a moderate price.

The second day was less unpleasant; we had left the mountainous country, and the body-shaking curves were behind us. About 4.30 the train arrived at Kinchasa, near Leopoldville, and in less than four hours my luggage was conveyed from the railway station to an hotel about three hundred yards distant. It was with relief that I saw the steamer for the up-river voyage lying at her berth, for I knew Kinchasa of old. I was there in 1900. At that time the daily routine was as follows: at 5 A.M., with the aid of two boys to fight the mosquitoes, I breakfasted amid fires of dry baobab fruit, which produced a strong and disagreeable smoke, but the mosquitoes did not spare me; I went to work still protected by my two boys, who frantically waved branches on all sides of me, but without producing much effect. In the afternoon there was a change, but only in the boys. The first two retired exhausted, and their successors applied themselves with vigour to the work of keeping the mosquitoes at bay; when evening came dense clouds of my tormentors obliged me to retire finally under my mosquito net.

Apart from these little pests, there is an abundance of snakes in Kinchasa, that makes the keeping of domestic animals impossible. I have seen whole pigs swallowed by them.

There has been a decided improvement since 1900 in the sanitation of Kinchasa, but none the less I was

THE KEY OF THE UPPER CONGO

relieved to find that the steamer would start in forty-eight hours at the latest. I utilised the spare time in visiting Leopoldville and paying calls on my old friends. To describe the progress that has been made there would demand a special chapter, and would not interest the general reader. I therefore pass over the subject with the remark that the advance has been enormous. To give an idea of the importance of Leopoldville I may say that more than two hundred Europeans are permanent residents, and among its industries is shipbuilding. Leopoldville is the key of the Upper Congo, and its prosperity must increase from year to year.

The *Fumu-Tangu* is a stern-wheel steamer of about fifty tons burthen; she belongs to the Kasai Company, and ensures a regular weekly service between Kinchasa and Dima, the headquarters of the Company. The details of the journey up the river Congo are not uninteresting, but they have been described by the fertile and brilliant pen of Sir H. H. Johnston, and I will not attempt to follow him. In Kinchasa a fellow-traveller had engaged a cook from Sierra Leone, where, according to his own account, he had served the Governor in a similar capacity. We entrusted to him all our most precious dainties—beef, the last we should see for years, potatoes, and currants—at 6 A.M.; when the midday meal hove in sight our mouths watered, but our domestic produced a mess which he termed “Irish stew,” the result of boiling all the ingredients together for six hours; so we dined on bread and cheese.

OLD FRIENDS

Among the black crew I found some old friends who came up to me, greeted me, complimented me, and asked me for presents. I gratified their wishes and was at once a general favourite, so much so, in fact, that in the evening, when a fly fell into my soup, three black hands at once dived into my dish to rescue the intruder and save me from annoyance. On the whole we had a very agreeable journey. On arriving at Dima I changed steamers and boarded the good ship *Marie*, a stern-wheel boat of twelve tons burthen, which for two years was to be my sole means of communication with the outside world. We had two hours steaming down the Kasai before we entered the mouth of the Kwango; ten miles from the mouth we reached the Kwilu River. The shores are absolutely flat, and navigation is endangered by numerous sandbanks. Near the outlet of the Kwilu it was possible to distinguish with ease the waters of the two streams—the Kwilu clear and transparent, the Kwango yellow and muddy. As soon as I reached the Kwilu I began to feel at home, not that I had ever been there before, but the boat was *the* boat of the Kwilu, the captain was *the* captain of the Kwilu; he knew all the natives, and all the natives knew him. We were heartily welcomed everywhere.

After passing the mouth of the Inzia the right bank of the river begins to rise, and attains a height of some thirty feet near Chimbana, which was formerly the most important commercial centre on the Kwilu; indeed, it may be said that the whole of the trade of the district passed through this place.

A PERNICIOUS HABIT

At that time the population, composed of Bahuana freemen and Bayanzi slaves, exceeded 500 persons, at least 200 of whom were waiting on the shore to try to barter their goods with the steamer. Among their wares were bunches of hemp for the delectation of the Baluba crew of the boat, for it must be understood that hemp smoking is a widely spread and pernicious practice. In the interests of their health I intervened, purchased the whole supply and deposited it in the fire. They came to remonstrate, and when I tried to explain how bad it was for their health to smoke it, they would not believe me; in fact, one man told me that hemp was food, strength, and happiness for them, and that without it life was not worth living. So far I am glad to say the Kwilu peoples have not taken over the practice, but I fear it is merely a question of time.

Among the people on the shore at Chimbana was the chief, named Luano, but I learned later that his authority was small, all the power being in the hands of his mother, an energetic dame of some fifty summers.

We stayed at Chimbana about an hour, taking in wood. At last the steamer whistled, and we were putting off from the quay. This is the supreme moment from the commercial point of view; the goods are perishable and prices fall rapidly, sometimes to an extent of 50 to 90 per cent. Bargains are rapidly struck, and the goods begin to arrive; fowls, bananas, bags of flour, sweet potatoes, live goats, parrots, and other miscellaneous articles begin to hurtle through

A NOVEL METHOD OF BARTER

the air, for the boat is already leaving the shore behind. There is a return current from the boat to the shore of articles intended to pay for the produce thus thrown on board; the crew despatch bottles of salt, pieces of European cloth, brass rods, &c., in payment for the delicacies thrown at their heads. The parties to the transaction deal fairly with one another, for a defaulter would be a marked man. It does, however, happen occasionally that advances made by the crew on the voyage upstream, which should be met by a corresponding supply of home produce on the return voyage, have to be written off as bad debts, but this seems to trouble the losers but little, for their profits are enormous. To give an idea of the extent of this minor trade an incident on the Inzia may be related; the boat *Est du Kwango* was at anchor, and the captain resting from his labours on his downy couch; the crew were busily engaged in making purchases; the stock of flour increased steadily, and as more and more purchases were made, the boat sank lower and lower in the water till she finally disappeared beneath the surface.

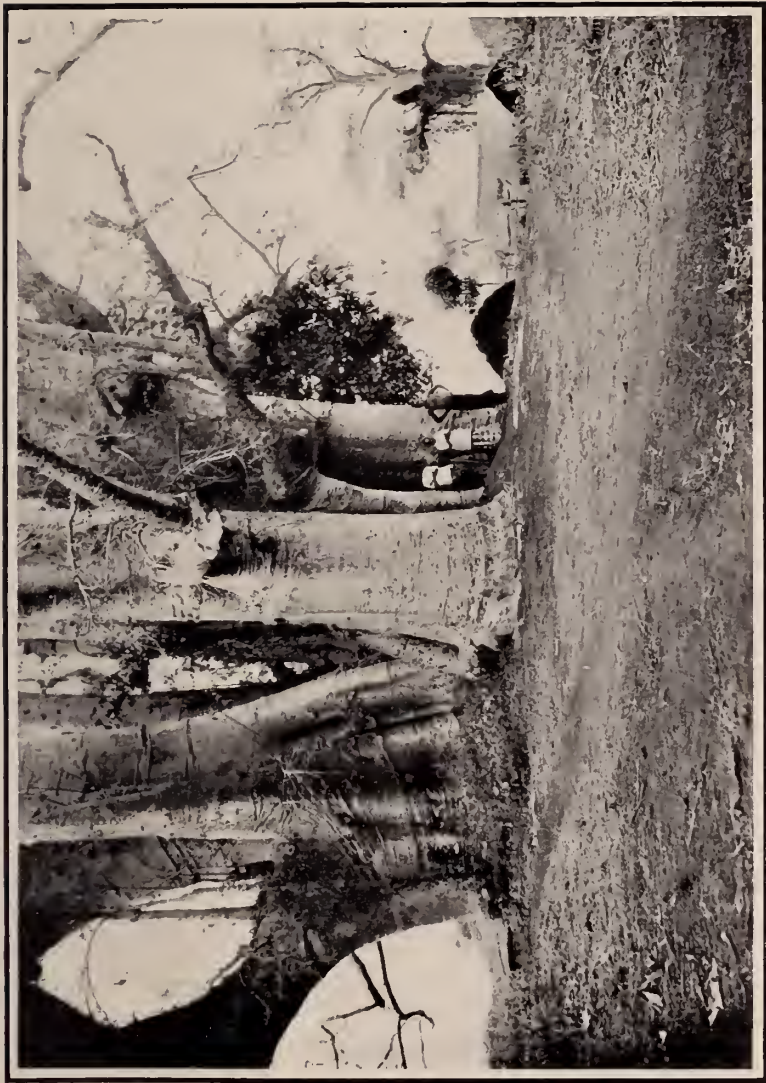
On the way up the river several islands are passed, overgrown with trees and shrubs. The right bank of the river, originally the higher, diminishes in height, while the left bank increases till by the time we reach Luano the right bank is absolutely level with the water and the left some forty feet high. On the way we passed several hippopotami, which seemed to be on familiar terms with the steamer; the crocodiles on the sandbanks lazily slid into the water at the last

A DEPOSED MONARCH

moment, as if they really felt it was a work of supererogation to avoid so harmless a visitant, and an elephant which met us in the morning swimming down stream, his trunk high out of the water in the form of an S, only disappeared into the bush when we had got within a hundred yards of him.

Somewhere on the journey between Kongo and Luano we passed a wide, grassy expanse, some seven hundred yards square ; before we got there the captain informed me that in the middle would be seen a buffalo, which was always there ; and so it was. This buffalo had been seen on every journey up and down the river, and had acquired a supernatural reputation among the natives, who believed that it always remained on that one spot. Singularly enough some two years later, on my return, the buffalo was still there, but I should not like to affirm that it had not stirred from the place. It was a solitary old bull, one of the vicious animals which had been driven by a younger competitor out of the herd over which he ruled.

The captain of the *Marie* had one great peculiarity ; he was liable to sudden and convenient attacks of total deafness, which, singularly enough, coincided with the propounding of a question which he did not wish to answer. In this connection may be told the story of how he taught Dutch to one of his Belgian passengers. The latter, whom we will term Mr. X., was able, like most Belgians, to speak Flemish, which is practically the same as Dutch ; like many Walloon Belgians he was, however, disinclined to use any other tongue than



THE BAOBAB TREE

A typical baobab tree at Kinchasa. The residents of this place usually take new-comers to the tree, and then tell them its circumference. The stranger usually disputes the figures, which do seem incredible. The baobab seems to thrive only near the coast; above the Stanley Pool they diminish in numbers, and in the Kasai district they are practically absent.

AN AMUSING INCIDENT

French, so during the voyage from Europe, which he made in the captain's company, the pair who were in the service of the same company did not exchange a single word, for the captain spoke no French, though he understood it to some extent. When they reached the Dima Mr. X. was ordered to proceed up the Kwilu on the boat commanded by his fellow-passenger, and the latter resolved to have his revenge for the somewhat discourteous treatment he had suffered. So he rose at an unearthly hour and had finished his breakfast well before 6 A.M. When his one and only passenger appeared some two hours later he approached the captain and remarked in French that he would like some breakfast. He was met with the reply (in Dutch): "I am extremely sorry, but I really don't understand what you are talking about." Mr. X., talking very slowly and very loudly, repeats that he would be glad of something to eat, but again the captain assures him that he is incomprehensible. Despairing cries of "Manger, manger, manger," produce no effect, and pantomimic action is of equally little avail. At last, the hour being nearly 9 A.M., Mr. X. in desperation breaks out in Flemish, "Good gracious, man, give me something to eat; I am starving," and with a smile of triumph the captain replies, "With the greatest pleasure; and you really owe me gratitude for having taught you to speak Dutch."

On the afternoon of the fourth day on the Kwilu we arrived at Kongo. I went on shore and installed

COOKS AND THEIR WAYS

myself. Kongo is a settlement with one permanent inhabitant of white blood; the population is composed of Bayanzi and Bahuana; but from an anthropological point of view they were of little interest in consequence of the amount of crossing.

Of course my first care was to select a suitable retinue. It is quite impossible to venture into new country if one cannot rely upon one's own people. Consequently, though I am highly conservative and like to keep my two servants for the whole time I am in the Congo, I at once reject all who do not give complete satisfaction in the early days of their service. Accordingly I engaged and dismissed fully twenty boys in the first two months before I had finally got one who was to my liking. Him I secured under the following circumstances. A European informed me that he was parting with his cook on the grounds that he was vain and fond of dress, and never ready with the meals at the right time because he was always engaged in beautifying his person. Now a negro who adorns himself to perform his culinary duties is a real treasure; if in a European settlement you see a man who is exceptionally dirty and disgusting you may be sure it is the cook. The blacks insist on their wives making use of spoons and other appliances when they prepare food for their lords and masters; but these precautions are deemed useless where it is only a European who is to consume the product. I have seen an exceedingly dirty individual preparing meat-balls for his master by taking the mince

COOKS AND THEIR WAYS

into his hands and rolling it on his chest until it was shaped to his liking; I may add that his master was not present. But the aboriginal beau, whose name was Bokale, served me faithfully and gave much satisfaction, till, as will be seen later, he was called to a higher sphere of duty as chief of a village. I interviewed him at an early opportunity and gave him some good advice and practical illustrations, and assured him that for the first month he might serve up my food half cooked, burn it or otherwise render it uneatable with impunity, but that, if after the expiration of his period of licence he did not serve me up quite tip-top meals, I should visit his iniquities with grievous unnamed penalties. I may here remark that the importance of proper food is only too often underestimated by novices in tropical climates. It is a well-known fact that appetite is as a general rule in hot countries small or non-existent; thus anything like disgust at the nature of the food put before one prevents a European from taking what is absolutely necessary for the support of his bodily strength; he is usually anæmic, and the more anæmic he grows the less appetite he has; and so he goes from bad to worse, till he either returns to Europe or leaves his bones in a foreign land. Cooking is of course of the greatest importance where food is scarce, and where supplies, once exhausted by improvidence or waste, are not readily replaced.

This danger did not exist however in Kongo; any amount of chickens could be purchased at

CANNIBALISM

threepence apiece, goats and pigs were frequently refused when the top price asked was two shillings. As for native food, enormous quantities of cassava, sweet potatoes, yams, bananas, beans (probably introduced by Europeans), plantains, maize, &c., are exported, the people not being able to consume all that they produce.

How then can we explain the fact that it is precisely in this country that cannibalism is most rife? In some parts of the Congo only enemies slain in war are eaten by the victors; but in Kongo slaves are also purchased and eaten. One day Mapanda, Chief of Kongo, sent me a so-called "antelope leg," which I instantly recognised as a portion of a human thigh. I have in Europe an anthropological friend, normally a vegetarian, the wish of whose life is to take part in a cannibal feast. As he was not with me and I had no means of sending the titbit home to him in Europe, I returned it to the donor, and explained to him that such proceedings were most improper. He did not follow my reasoning, however, and in fact he took up the position of my vegetarian friend, who does not distinguish between the practice of eating the flesh of goats and that of human beings.

For a European who has neither the right nor the power to intervene, it is a most uncomfortable position to be obliged to witness, or at any rate know of the perpetration of acts of cannibalism in his immediate neighbourhood. But I hear that the Government is now proposing to establish

A MUSEUM OF SKULLS

several small posts with the express intention of putting down the practice.

Mapanda is a very old man; when I met him he was unable to walk, so I gave him some arnica from my medicine chest with which to rub his legs. Some three or four days later he came to see me on foot and offer his thanks for the effectual remedy. But I heard later that my benevolence had excited grave dissatisfaction in the neighbourhood; for, as they said, "Mapanda finds it difficult enough to die as it is, and if this stranger supplies him with drugs like this he will assuredly live for ever." They did not seem to have any particular animosity against him; but I think they grudged him the quantity of palm wine which he consumed. In my presence one morning he consumed gallons without being apparently any the worse for it. I may add that he ate very little as a rule. How old he was I cannot say, but I know that he counted great-great-grandchildren among his descendants.

In the village, near his house, Mapanda has a museum of skulls, which I coveted for anthropological purposes. These are not only the crania of enemies and slaves who had been eaten in the village, but also crania sent as tribute by the neighbouring villages, who have to transmit to him in recognition of his overlordship the skulls of all enemies whom they kill in war.

About a month after I reached Kongo I was summoned to a neighbouring village, over which Fumasita ruled, to arbitrate in a dispute between

A CASE FOR ARBITRATION

them and the village of Chilumu. To make the position clear I must remark that the Bayanzi village of Fumasita was at war with the Bambala village of Fuede, both being at peace with Chilumu's people (Bahuana). A Mombala had killed a Mohuana by mistake, thinking he was a Moyanzi of Fumasita. It is a well-recognised principle of African law that compensation has to be paid in cases of this sort. Now the village of Fuede was far too strong for it to be possible to make any claim against the people with prospect of success; in fact, I could not have extracted compensation from them myself, even if I had wished it. Chilumu, therefore, approached the folk of Fumasita and demanded compensation for the loss of his vassal, which, as he pointed out, was entirely due to the fact that Fuede and Fumasita were at war with one another; in explanation of his failure to claim damages from Fuede, he insisted on their remote situation, four hours' march away, and the impossibility of extracting compensation from so strong a litigant unless they chose to appear at a palaver (*milonga*).

Fumasita replied, very naturally, that they were entirely innocent in the matter, and that, in any case, Chilumu's man was guilty of contributory negligence in venturing near Fumasita when he knew that Fuede was at war with it. The proceedings lasted for some four hours, and in the end I decided that no compensation was payable. The chiefs of the village concerned were most grateful for my assistance, and each gave me a goat in payment. But, at the same

SETTLING DISPUTES

time, it must be admitted that my judgment was received with universal dissatisfaction; and I can only plead, in self-defence, that I had returned from Europe to the Congo too recently to have fallen back into African modes of thought.

The Bahuana and the Bayanzi, who were concerned in the palaver, have largely adopted Bambala judicial and other customs; but their appeal to a stranger like myself is not among these alien usages—it is essentially a Bahuana institution. But before appealing to me Chilumu had sent a message to the Bambala village of Fuete and demanded *kama-kumi*, otherwise termed *mavuka*,¹ but without result; this is a Bambala custom, and if his demand had been complied with, there would have been a palaver (*milonga*) attended by all the villages of the neighbourhood interested in the case or otherwise, and the decision would have been reached by acclamation.

Disputes, whether between people of different villages, whether two Bambala, or a Mombala and a member of another tribe, are settled by *milonga*. If A. steals a goat belonging to B. he probably boasts of it before the day is out among his intimate friends, pledging them all to secrecy. The information travels with express speed to B., who sends a messenger to A. asking for *kama-kumi* (literally, hundred or ten), that is for a few *djimbu* (a small shell worth three-pence a hundred), a little salt or other trifle. The giving of *kama-kumi* is equivalent to an admission of

¹ A small gift, which means as much as "pleading guilty" in our courts; it will be explained in detail later.

NATIVE LEGAL METHODS

guilt and responsibility for the act. If the culprit refuses to give *kama-kumi* the village of the claimant may, with its allies, declare war on the village of the defendant, supported in like manner by his friends; but it is rarely that matters come to this pass, unless, as was the case with Fuede in the problem put before me, the offender lives in the midst of friendly villages and at a distance from the country of the claimant, so that the chances of a war are remote.

If *kama-kumi* is given, B. sends an arrow to the chief of A.'s village, on which are incised a number of cuts corresponding to the number of days that are to elapse before the palaver is held. When the appointed day comes the male population of the two villages chiefly concerned in the case, and of all the neighbouring villages, whether allied with the parties or not, assembles for the *milonga*. B. or his representative opens the case, and A. replies. He admits that he stole the goat, but retorts that B.'s grandfather some fifty years before was guilty of seducing A.'s grandfather's wife. B. admits this, and pleads in extenuation that A.'s grandfather stole a fowl from his father; A.'s reply is that a slave of B.'s grandfather's brother-in-law once stole a pig from his (A.'s) uncle. And so the case proceeds, each party being backed up by the eloquence of noted advocates until either charges or countercharges are exhausted, and the victory then falls to the party which still has a complaint against the other side up its sleeve. It rests with the assembly to decide whether the evidence is admissible. A good point is hailed with a

NATIVE LEGAL METHODS

murmur of *pimbo* (good), or *pimbo nzanza* (very good), and a false issue is shouted down with ejaculations of *kubela* (ill, *i.e.* you are ill).

The legal arguments finished, if the plaintiff wins the question of compensation arises. There is a recognised scale of payments for most offences; in other cases the one side offers a single goat, the other will not take less than twenty, and several days may be taken up with this discussion; in the rare event of no agreement being reached the contending villages go to war.

If a goat is stolen portions of its flesh are distributed to the allied villages; if war results they, as partakers of the guilt, will support the village of the original thief. Meat is, it is true, at a premium in this part of the country; but the distribution of the flesh is not, strictly speaking, a means of purchasing the support of allies, though the latter would be angry at being deprived of their share, and would refuse to take up arms in aid of the thief.

In the Bambala country a prominent chief often unites a number of villages in a bond against bloodshed. If a murder is committed in a village belonging to the bond each of the other villages demands *kamakumi*, and holds its separate *milonga*. Each village has a right to compensation for the death; and, if the murderer cannot pay the full amount, the responsibility falls upon the chief, or, which is the same thing, upon the village. The murderer is usually ruined, but it seldom happens that the village cannot liquidate the debt. If their assets are not sufficient

A BOND AGAINST BLOODSHED

the original offender, his nephews and nieces, his brothers and other relatives are liable to be handed over to the individual creditor, and retained by him as long as the debt remains. These bondsmen are virtually slaves, but the creditor may not sell them as he may ordinary slaves. They are, however, retained, not so much for the sake of the work which can be got out of them, as in order to increase the importance of the creditor. The release of the bondsman at the earliest possible moment is a matter of honour, and each member of the bondsman's village feels himself equally bound to aim at his or her release. Slaves may, of course, be given in payment of debt, and in this case there is a simple transfer of property in the person, just as in any ordinary case of sale of a slave; the value of a slave appears to be about the same as the amount of debt for which the bondsman stands.

Soon after my efforts at arbitration I was informed by the captain of the *Marie* that I was to be honoured with a visit from a distinguished personage, a very great man indeed. He was coming down by the next steamer, I was informed, so some four and twenty hours before I began my preparations. I took out my gun and brought down a couple of birds. Then I went into my kitchen, and with my own hands I prepared various dainty cakes, knowing full well how much a European who has been deprived of his ordinary fare appreciates such luxuries. In due time the steamer arrived. Two exceedingly Teutonic looking gentlemen stood on the deck. One of them was

A DISTINGUISHED GUEST

as fully armed as Tweedledum and Tweedledee; his cartridges filled at least four pockets and his waist-belt, and his armoury consisted of a revolver and a gun, with other weapons in the background. I went on board and invited him and his companion to lunch. After consulting two watches, he deigned to accept my invitation. We went up to the house and found that the cakes and other *hors d'œuvres* were ready. Before we began our meal a man of the village came up to me, and begged me to reassure the foreigners he and his fellow-villagers really had no bad intentions, and it was quite safe to lay aside all the paraphernalia of war. Fortunately my visitor did not understand.

My refreshments were greatly appreciated by my guests, especially as they had, according to their own account, just quitted a land where snakes and monkey were the only food obtainable. They had, in fact, just come from Michakila, where ordinary mortals find abundant supplies of goats, fowls, and pigs.

They inquired how long I had been in Africa, to which I replied by saying I had been in Kongo about a month. The martial gentleman was good enough to give me some advice as to the rules which it was necessary to observe if I wished to enjoy good health, as he had spent fully four months in the Congo. I accepted his suggestions with gratitude and humility. It was only after a flow of words, uninterrupted for ten minutes, that the captain remarked that I had spent more years in the Congo than my nestor had spent months, and that possibly I already had some know-

A DISTINGUISHED GUEST

ledge of the questions on which he was laying down the law.

Years later I read a book, published by the very same traveller, in which he described how he had fired a village, how he had tried a new rifle on the inhabitants, and how he had flogged a woman who had displeased his servant. Later still I learned that he had gone, on pretence of scientific research, into an English colony, and had there robbed the natives of their most sacred relics. Well, perhaps it was better for him and for me that I did not know then his real character; there might have been trouble in store for both of us.

What is to be deplored most with people of this kind is that they bring undeserved discredit on their profession and on their country, and I needs must state that he was not a typical scientist.

CHAPTER IV

The Bambala people—Bodily ornamentation—Indigenous food-stuffs—Cannibal practices—Palm-wine—Snuff-taking—Women and agriculture—Native industries.

A FEW days after this I left for Kolokoto, on the west of the Kwilu, distant a good five hours' march from Kongo. The ground rises imperceptibly nearly all the way, as is obvious from the increasing depth of the brooks below the general level of the ground, but just before Kolokoto the plateau ends abruptly with a drop of some 800 feet. At a distance of about one hour's march from Kongo I entered the Bambala country, and the change in the character of the inhabitants left no doubt where the dividing line ran. The population on the banks of the Kwilu and for some twenty miles is exceedingly dense, so much so, in fact, that in a single day it would be possible to recruit thousands of hands for work as carriers or anything else; this portion of the area is called Kamba; the south-west, which is known as Mokunji, is far less densely populated, and in the north of Kolokoto there is, first, a settlement of Basongo, and beyond them an important tract inhabited by Bayanzi, the latter being known as Banyana; these areas are likewise very densely populated. The Bambala told me that

THE BAMBALA PEOPLE

they had purchased the region of Kamba from the Banyanzi in remote times, which probably means some sixty or seventy years back.

The Bambala migrated from the southern Kwengo less than a century ago, driven thence by the Balua, who were themselves expelled from their original seats by the Kioko (Bajoke, Chibokwe). The first mention of their existence is found in the writings of the eminent English traveller, Andrew Battell, who heard of them in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

In colour the Bambala are very dark brown, the hair is absolutely black, and the eye a greenish black with a yellow cornea. The face is not of the ordinary negro type, but much more refined; thick lips, for example, are quite exceptional, and only a small proportion have flat noses. The northern Bambala are strongly built and tall, but as we proceed southwards, with increasing scarcity of food comes a slighter type, which also seems to be lighter in colour. The hands and feet are small, and, like those of all coloured people, yellow on the palms and soles; they pick up objects with their feet with great dexterity.

In the north the women are not very good-looking, but farther to the south, where the males approximate to a feminine type, there are real beauties among the softer sex.

Both sexes wear practically the same dress—a strip of palm-cloth (*kipussu*), of its natural colour, about a yard in length and half a yard in width, worn round the waist in front and falling to the middle of the hips behind. Sometimes a girdle of

THE BAMBALA PEOPLE

similar cloth is added or a roll of grass coloured with red clay, and the women, like many other Bantu tribes, wear a string of beads under their cloth. Men wear skin aprons occasionally on which the hair is left. The garments are sewn with native-made needles (iron) and thread of palm fibre.

The head is partially shaved, and the bare portion is painted with soot and palm-oil; hair is allowed to grow on the top of the head in the form of a cap, and in old age a piece of palm-cloth, dyed red, may be added to cover a bald head or white hairs; as a special decoration a man who has slain a great enemy wraps the bones of his fingers, &c., in a cloth and wears them on his head; this is called *pungu*, and magical virtue is ascribed to it.

There is another fashion of hairdressing which consists in leaving the hair at the back of the head only and making it up into tresses with soot and palm-oil. The beard too comes in for adornment; it is often fairly long, but it is bound up under the chin, and pieces of clay are hidden in the knot to make its bulk larger. The eyebrows are usually shaved, so is the moustache.

Numerous ornaments are in use, but though the ears are pierced earrings do not seem to be worn; combs, made of wooden teeth bound together, serve the double purpose of adorning the wearer and providing a means of conveniently scratching the head. Brass bracelets are imported from Europe in great numbers, and men sometimes wear iron bracelets made in the country; a finely made iron bracelet is

BODILY ORNAMENTATION

also worn by a caste called *Muri*, to be described later. Imported rings are worn not only upon the fingers, but upon the great toe, and beads are also worn by both sexes.

Certain forms of ornament are reserved for men; these include teeth, human, leopard, or ape, the leopard teeth being usually imitation; small antelope horns are worn round the neck, and these too are imitated in tin.

Tattooing proper is rare, for the colour of the skin will not allow the pattern to appear to advantage; all that is done is to make a quadrilateral on the arm with three or four needles; the pigment is decayed rubber. Ornamental scars are more elaborate; they are made about the age of puberty, and rise above the surface of the skin owing to artificial retardation of the healing process. Men have a line running over the forehead from the outside corner of the eyes, and a line across the chest, more or less straight, about one inch broad and often more than an inch above the adjacent skin; a lozenge pattern decorates the navel. The lozenge pattern is also usual with women, who decorate both arms and body in this way.

In addition the body is painted red, and as *tukula* wood, imported for the purpose from the Kasai, is too expensive, clay is used by the Bambala beaux and belles, who admit that the practice is intended to increase their beauty. In the case of mourners, the object being different, soot is used by the men and brown clay by the women.

The ordinary food consists of manioc flour made



ORNAMENTAL HEAD-GEAR

In Europe we associate head-gear with the idea of protection from the sun (at any rate as far as men are concerned), but in Africa it is purely ornamental. A Mobunda does not think himself presentable without what he calls a hat; this will consist of bunches of feathers, a wreath of leaves, or a small wooden carving; any object that he thinks may contribute to his beauty; as for protection he relies on the thick mass of woolly hair with which nature has provided him.

INDIGENOUS FOOD-STUFFS

into a paste with water and boiled. The leaves of the plant are also eaten prepared with palm-oil and pepper. Animal food is not limited to goats, pigs, and other domestic small fry, for, frogs excepted, everything helps to make a stew, from ants and grasshoppers upwards to man. Human flesh is, of course, a special delicacy, and its use is forbidden to women, though they do not disdain to indulge secretly. Other tit-bits are a thick white worm found in palm-trees, locusts, rats, and blood boiled with cassava flour. Human flesh is not the only food forbidden to women ; they may not eat goat's flesh, hawks, vultures, small birds, snakes, animals hunted with weapons, crows, or parrots ; to the rule against flesh killed with weapons there are two exceptions—the antelope and a small rat.

Rich people, who can indulge in luxuries, eat kola nuts in great numbers ; a kind of native pepper is known ; oil is obtained from the palm-nut, rarely from the ground-nut. But the chief condiment is salt, which is made of the ashes of water plants ; there is, however, a strong preference for the imported salt, which is in crystalline form as a rule ; the crystals are perforated and strung on a string which is dipped into the food-pot. On a journey salt is eaten as a stimulant and salt water is also drunk. Earth-eating is by no means uncommon, and it is said to be good for stomach-ache ; the earth in use has an astringent taste.

Manioc is prepared in a round pot. First of all the pot is filled half full of water, then a single

NATIVE COOKERY

handful of flour is thrown in and the pot is put on the fire ; as soon as the water boils as much more flour is added as is needed to take up the water, and the whole is vigorously stirred with a wooden spoon for some three minutes, then patted on the top with the spoon two or three times and turned out ; the result is a round mass of pudding of the consistency of blanc-mange. The ordinary way of eating it is to take a pinch out with the fingers, dip it in a little fat, and pop it into the mouth to be swallowed without chewing.

As regards animal food, if there is abundance it is simply boiled ; they eat it with their fingers, taking a small piece of meat, chew it and swallow it, and then a larger piece of manioc ; it must be remembered that meat is for them simply a bonbon, much as chocolates are for us. Once I killed an elephant, which they were at liberty to consume, blood, skin, and bones, if they pleased ; after they had eaten as much as they wanted they came and asked for their dinner.

If there is not much animal food for the company it is prepared in a different way. The first thing is to clarify palm-oil ; it is put on the fire in a pot, looking much like a mass of soft soap ; when the oil begins to boil it is precipitated into cold water, the impurities go to the bottom, and the clarified product is a transparent liquid like water. To this a large quantity of cayenne pepper is added and the fowl or other meat boiled four hours ; after the oil has got cool the meal commences. They dip their fingers into the pot, taking a fragment of meat, which is, of course, very

ANIMAL FOOD

soft, and eat it with manioc. Men will cook meat for themselves on the march, but manioc is always prepared by women; even when I wanted some for my own consumption my cook would not prepare it; a woman had to be engaged in the village where we were.

Goats and pigs are slaughtered by being clubbed, so as not to lose the blood; but the former are also skinned alive and die under the knife, which is of iron, home-made, and as sharp as a razor. They have a curious way of killing fowls; they take one by the neck, whirl it several times round the head, and finally the body flies off, leaving the head in the hand of the executioner. The poultry are in a semi-savage state, and a fowl hunt affords fine sport for the youth of the villages, who pursue the creature with sticks and stones till it is exhausted.

Cannibalism is an everyday occurrence, and according to the natives themselves, who display no reticence except in the presence of state officials, it is based on a sincere liking for human flesh. Enemies killed in war and people buried alive after the poison test, or dying as a result of it, *i.e.* criminals, are eaten; so, too, are slaves, and further north and near the river the latter are killed on rare occasions to provide a cannibal feast. In the latter case the body may be buried for a couple of days and a fire kept burning over the grave; the flesh is consumed in the ordinary way with manioc flour. Criminals' bodies are treated in the same way, but the corpses of enemies are cut up and eaten within five minutes in some cases. I

CANNIBAL PRACTICES

have never been able to trace any magical or religious basis for any of these customs.

Vessels in which *misuni* (human flesh) has been cooked are broken and thrown away, and this rather suggests some magical idea, but they say that the custom is only adopted to prevent women or other prohibited persons from using the pot subsequently. On the other hand, this prohibition to use the pot subsequently suggests that there was in the past some idea of possible magical effects, though women are at the present day debarred from human flesh, as they are from goat's flesh, only in order that there may be a larger supply for the men. And this supposition is borne out by the fact that a class of men called *muri* are debarred from using human flesh, as well by the practice of cannibalism as in connection with the pact against bloodshed.

There is only one way of abolishing cannibalism in these countries, and that is not by making laws against it. On one occasion I gave one of my boys a tin of sardines, telling him to divide it equally between them. With tears in his eyes he said that it was impossible; he could not eat sardines, for the cook had given him a *kissi* (medicine) to prevent him, and he would die if he ate them. I put him at his ease by giving him a stronger *kissi* from Europe, and to see him dispose of those sardines was a real joy.

To wean the Bambala and other tribes from cannibalism it is necessary to give them a *kissi*, which will prevent them from eating human flesh under penalty of death if they disobey. I have not the slightest

PALM-WINE

doubt that if some one in whom they had confidence adopted this means they would give up eating human flesh once and for all.

Water is the commonest drink, and in the village cups are used for drinking purposes; but on a march the water is thrown into the mouth with the hand; they lie down on their stomachs and, bending the fingers, scoop up the water without spilling a drop, though the hand never touches the mouth in the process.

The so-called palm-wine is, of course, preferred, but the trees are private property and the wine must be paid for. To climb the tree the operator takes a vine sling, passes it round the tree, and fastens the two ends together with a stick, so that a circular cord is formed; then planting his foot against the tree he walks up, jerking the loop upward as he goes till the top is reached. With an adze-shaped knife a cut is made just below the crown, a leaf arranged as a funnel draining into a pot fastened to the tree, and the climber descends. The wine is a milky liquid, tasting like coco-milk with a few drops of lemon-juice; it begins to ferment after an hour, and is an intoxicating liquor after six hours, but at first it is absolutely innocuous. The morning juice is the best and freshest, and after that the evening, but some people are never tired of tapping their trees.

Tobacco is grown in large quantities, and the care of the plantations is the work of the men; the plants are always actually within the village, and after the beginning of the rainy season, when the seed is put

SNUFF-TAKING

in the ground, the owner of the tobacco garden is often to be seen weeding his plot or making little leaf shelters to cover the small plants. In seven months the plants are mature and the leaves are plucked and dried; when they are to be used as snuff quick drying is essential, and then they are put over embers; then they are ground in mills, or rather mortars, in which a pestle with a long pointed handle is turned round. Of the women the young ones alone indulge in snuff-taking; all men take it, and the upper lip is thick with it, so that they seem to have a green moustache, and, as in olden days in Europe, it is common for acquaintances to offer each other snuff, which is carried in goat's horn boxes, or sometimes in a banana leaf. To be good snuff must be strong, and Europeans who inhale native snuff find it too much for them; for the black man does not inhale but merely rubs it on his nose.

Tobacco for smoking is dried in the shade; the leaf is simply crushed in the hand and then put in the pipe with a large piece of glowing wood; the smoke is inhaled, but not in the European way; the pipe is handed round, and each man gives a couple of preliminary puffs to strengthen the glow and then draws the smoke directly into the lungs, instead of first filling the cavity of the mouth as we do. Three patterns of pipe are in use: firstly, *kinzu*, of European form but native origin; secondly, *motobo*, a gourd pipe; and thirdly, *fangu*, a bamboo pipe, all with pottery bowls. The gourd is partly filled with water, the bowl inserted in a hole in the top, and the mouth



THE NORTHERN BAMBALA

Although the traveller may at first be prejudiced against these people because of their well-known cannibalistic propensities, he will soon find out that they are very pleasant on the whole. When kindly treated they are the most devoted servants one can imagine.



A EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

The newly formed European settlement is quite a feature in the Congo landscape; it is mostly situated near the river, and consists of clay houses built in a clearing of the forest. Usually everything is made of local material, and the big companies have travelling carpenters, who go from place to place to make the necessary furniture. Old worn-out dug-outs furnish the best wood for this purpose.

WOMEN AND AGRICULTURE

applied to the place where the stalk of the gourd has been. In the bamboo stem the pottery bowl is inserted about one-third of the distance from the end. If men are on the road and have no pipe they roll a banana leaf into a cone and smoke the tobacco placed in it.

For ordinary purposes the gardens cultivated by the women are outside the village in a clearing of the forest, the rough work being done by the men before the beginning of the rains. At this time of year it is impossible to get labourers.

As soon as the rains begin the women plant the seed of haricots, the kernels of ground nuts, branches of sweet potatoes and manioc, and young plants of bananas and plantains; the latter are formed by the roots of the old plants, which send up hundreds of suckers.

Big trees are burned down by the men in the process of clearing, small trees are cut down and the roots and stumps burned; the branches of big trees are cut away and the trunks allowed to lie on the ground, and remain sometimes for many years, the cultivation taking place between the trunks. The woman's only implement is the hoe, a triangular tanged piece of iron with a wooden handle, worth about three fowls. Fresh ground is broken yearly, and all the produce belongs to the head of the family. Theoretically the owner of the land can control it, but practically every man takes his plot where he pleases, and as there is room enough no quarrels arise as to the allocation of the ground. As a guard against thieves, simple

NATIVE INDUSTRIES

charms such as egg-shells, a piece of bone, or a broken pot are placed in the field. These charms are prepared by rubbing them with magical earth, which is usually inherited, but may be bought from the magician if the stock is exhausted.

In addition to agriculture women are charged with the making of pots, which they say they learnt from the Bahuana. No wheel is in use, but the pot is built up from a base and turned round and round on some old vessel which serves as a stand. The ordinary pot varies in diameter from five to sixteen inches; the edge is flared, and below it are incised bands of parallel horizontal lines. After a long process of sun-drying the pots are put into the fire and remain there many hours.

Weaving and basketry are the work of men, and they say that the latter was learnt from the Banyanzi. The ordinary basket is circular on a quadrangular wooden base; it has a closely fitting basket-work cover. Small baskets are used as purses for the shell money, and triangular baskets are used to carry food. They are sometimes waterproofed by a thin covering of mixed wood and clay. Palm cloth is made of the cuticle of the leaf of the *Raffia* palm; it is pulled off when the leaves are young, in long strips, which are dried in the sun. Examples of the loom may be seen in the British Museum.

Ironworking is, of course, the business of the men; the ore is found everywhere in great abundance, and small ingots are used as currency. The smelting furnaces are like those of the Bahuana, and the only

NATIVE INDUSTRIES

other process which the metal usually undergoes is hammering. The soft iron knives require sharpening every five minutes, but when the edge is on they cut through rubber—which no steel knife can touch—in a moment. For firemaking implements the iron is wrapped in certain herbs, the identity of which is carefully concealed, heated to a high temperature, and thrown into cold water.

The tools of a smith consist of a double bellows like those of the Baluba, a T-shaped anvil, and a hammer with a pointed handle; these latter it is impossible to obtain, for death is the lot of the smith who parts with his tools. The sister's son of a smith learns his trade from him and inherits his tools at his death.

The houses are also built by the men; they are rectangular, about six feet by fifteen, and 6 feet high. Stakes are driven into the ground some 6 inches from each other; over these grass is bound, and the whole receives a covering of palm-leaf ribs bound tightly together, and over this grass is again bound. In the centre of the short side is a long stake which takes the ridge poles, and poles parallel to it run at intervals along the slope down to the eaves pole. The roof is completed by interweaving palm ribs in the ordinary way. The only opening is four feet above the ground, and is fitted with a rectangular door of palm-leaf ribs which slides between the wall and two stakes. Above the doorway are fetishes.

Two steps, composed of forked stakes with cross-pieces, lead up to the door. There is no special place

NATIVE HOUSES

for the fire, and the smoke escapes by the door. There are two compartments, one for adults, another at the back for small children. The bed is made of stakes and matting, and along one of the walls runs a palm-rib shelf, the outer edge hung from the roof by two strings, the inner attached to the wall. Weapons are hung on the walls from pegs. Houses usually face more or less north and south. Each village has a bachelors' hut, which is also the guest house. Granaries are built by the rich ; they are on piles and are circular, with a diameter of 18 inches.

CHAPTER V

Trade and currency—Slave dealing—Laws of inheritance—Marriage and divorce—Commercial customs—Mourning observances—Ghost stories—Superstition—Tribal war.

AMONG the Bambala everyone is a dealer in live stock, which he sells for rubber; this he sells again to Europeans for salt; the salt is exchanged for slaves, the slaves sold for *djimbu*, and more goats or other live stock purchased in the country where they abound. In this export trade men alone are engaged; in the home trade—in food and pottery—women have in like manner a monopoly. The natural preference of chiefs and important men is for trade, but they do not regard labour as smiths or basket-makers as derogatory.

The *djimbu*, which serve as currency, are small shells (*Olivella nana*) from the Portuguese coast; one female slave = 15,000 to 20,000 *djimbu*; one slave = 10,000 *djimbu*; 100 *djimbu* will purchase one fowl or one big iron block or 12 ounces of salt; an iron hoe blade is worth 300 *djimbu*.

The profits made are enormous; 8000 *djimbu* will purchase ten goats, for which 250 balls of rubber are obtained; these are worth ten stone of salt, for which two slaves can be purchased; and the two slaves will fetch 20,000 *djimbu*. These operations take about a month, and the gross profit is 150 per cent. The

TRADE AND CURRENCY

trader as a rule goes in person and takes his own food ; he spends nothing on clothes, and the question of shoe leather does not trouble him ; he may spend a few *djimbu* on palm-wine, but there are practically no deductions from the gross profit, except for losses by death of stock or by robbery.

In Kolokoto 100 *djimbu* are worth 2*d.* or 3*d.* ; in Luanu they may rise to a premium of 100 per cent. ; on the Lukula they fell to a value of 1½*d.* Taking the mean value, a man with a capital of £1 makes £18 per annum, even if he does not add to his capital ; if he chose to put all his profits into his business, he would at the end of a few years be a rich man, but, of course, long before attaining to such a fortune he would be suppressed by jealous neighbours or highwaymen ; furthermore, the nature of their trade does not admit of unlimited extension. Credit is a well recognised thing, not only from one market day to another, but for longer periods, and to people residing at considerable distances. Interest amounts, as a rule, to some 400 per cent. per annum.

A debtor remains with the creditor as a hostage till his family or the village succeed in paying off the amount ; but if it is not forthcoming he becomes the personal slave, or rather bondsman, of the creditor, but he cannot be sold. Slave children, wives, and other property of the debtor may be seized, but as a rule the debtor's chief steps in and lends him money ; it often happens that the greater number of the inhabitants of a village are in the chief's power, because they owe him money in this way. If a

SLAVE DEALING

debtor dies his brother becomes liable for his debt, although the sister's son is the heir in the event of a man leaving property. Non-payment of debt may result in war, and the traders of the same tribe are seized and often killed; but this does not extinguish the debt; it is simply a means of jogging the debtor's memory.

Besides the bondsmen who lose their freedom through debt, there are real slaves who are born into that position or have been captured in war; these may be sold and in theory put to death by their owner; but as bloodshed is forbidden, this power is merely nominal. Slaves are exceedingly well treated, and are more like the children of their owner than anything else; they do not work harder than freemen; they can possess property and even other slaves, and this property cannot be dealt with by their owner at will; on the other hand, if they are without means their owner is responsible for their debts. When a man buys a new slave he decks him out on the first day in all his ornaments and best clothes and walks him round the village to show him off.

As we have seen above, anyone can plant where he will; but over and above the right to cultivate crops there is the right of shooting game and collecting rubber. The ownership of these is practically communal; a man will not object to a man of the same village dealing with either the game or the rubber plants of his own chief, while he will strongly resent the intrusion of men of another village. The rights over shooting and rubber are purchased by the

LAWS OF INHERITANCE

respective villages. As regards plantations the matter is somewhat different; an alien may plant where he will, but does not care to run the risk involved in having his crops near a strange village.

In the ordinary way game can be hunted anywhere by strangers and villagers alike, but the great hunt where the grass is burnt is the privilege of the latter. Ponds and lakes are owned by villages, but there is no property in running water.

The eldest son of the eldest sister is the heir, failing him the second son, and so on; failing sister's sons the eldest brother succeeds; widows cannot inherit. Wills are unknown, but of course property can be given away during life; the maternal uncle acts as guardian to the children. There are two kinds of marriage—by betrothal in childhood and by purchase. In the first case a boy, perhaps not more than six or seven years of age, declares that a certain little girl, three years old or less, is his wife; she might, of course, be older, but it seldom happens that there are unbetrothed maidens of more than three years of age. The prospective son-in-law visits the parents and takes them small presents; and after seven or eight years claims his bride, giving a larger present of some 2000 *djimbu*. If, however, the girl is unwilling she cannot be coerced; but before she can marry another, the original bridegroom must have his feelings soothed by a present of several thousand *djimbu*.

When an adult woman is married she is simply purchased, the cost being 10,000 to 15,000 *djimbu*.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

If the woman dies the money is not refunded, and the husband may even be forced to undergo the poison ordeal.

The position of the children of a marriage varies according as the mother has been purchased or betrothed. In the latter case they belong to the maternal uncle, and the purchase price of the girls goes to him. The children of the purchased wife, on the other hand, belong to the father, but the maternal uncle is still their guardian after the father's death. A slave woman cannot become a wife by betrothal, she must be purchased ; but as soon as she becomes a mother she steps into the position of a regular wife.

Polygyny is common, but all wives have equal rights. As a rule wives follow their husbands, but a man not infrequently takes up his abode in the village of his father-in-law. Each married woman has her own hut, which is shared by her small children up to the age of seven or eight ; after this, if they are the children of a betrothed wife, they may go to the maternal uncle. As long as children remain with the father he is supreme, but after marriage the father-in-law is more important, and a man may even side with his father-in-law against his own village.

A man may divorce his wife at will, but as she represents money he seldom does so, save for adultery, but the divorced wife does not regain her freedom, as her admirers are liable to pay fines to the husband ; practically divorce is no more than judicial separation. Women can only escape by running away to another tribe, and they run the risk of being eaten when they

COMMERCIAL CUSTOMS

arrive. If they escape this fate they are sold as slaves, and may be purchased by their former husbands. Widows can be claimed by the brother of the deceased; but if they are free women they may return to their parents and marry again if not thus claimed.

The Bambala tribe is a congeries of village communities each under its own chief, or *fumu*, who holds the position by virtue of his wealth, and is succeeded by the next richest. His chief function is to act as money-lender to his subjects. No tribute is paid to the *fumu*, but he has a right to the ribs of every human being killed for food, and to the hind legs of each animal killed during the great hunts. If a chief is young enough he acts as leader in war, otherwise one of his sons takes his place. Intermediate between the chief and the ordinary freeman is an hereditary class called *muri*, who may not eat human flesh nor yet the meat of fowls. They are distinguished by an iron bracelet and a special head-covering of cloth, which may not be removed by any one under penalty of death, even if the wrongdoer did not intend to touch it. The bracelet passes at death to the nephew (sister's son), who succeeds to the dignity, and he must steal the skull of his uncle. The corpse is buried for some two months, then the skull is exhumed, painted red, and placed in the house its owner used to occupy; the nephew must gain possession of it at night without being observed, and after hiding it for a few days in the bush, take it home to his hut. If a *muri* is killed in war, his bracelet is sent home, but the skull

THE POISON ORDEAL

has to be stolen as before from the hostile village. The chief privilege of the *muri* is the right to a portion of each animal killed in hunting.

In disputes between different villages recourse is had to the palaver which has already been described. Where two people of the same village are concerned, the poison (*putu*) ordeal plays the part of judge. Whether a man is accused of witchcraft, parricide, or of some minor offence he declares himself willing to take poison to prove his innocence. The *putu*, which is the bark of *Erythrophlæum guiniense*, is usually ground fine and mixed to a thick paste, from which are made five small loaves, and these are administered one after the other to the defendant; during the next fifteen minutes, if it is a case of witchcraft, the bystanders call on *Moloki* (the evil principle) to come out. The poison usually acts very quickly; it may kill the accused or cause purging or vomiting; the latter alone is regarded as a proof of innocence. In the second case the prisoner is compelled to dig a hole; he is then given a fowl to eat and enough palm-wine to make him quite intoxicated; after this he is laid in the hole, or possibly goes and lays himself down, and is then buried alive in order to prevent *Moloki* escaping with his last breath. A large fire is kept alight on the grave for two days and then the body is exhumed and eaten. An innocent man is carried round the village decorated with beads, and his accuser pays a pig as compensation for the false charge.

After a death from natural causes women lament

MOURNING OBSERVANCES

for several days and guns are fired to keep off *Moloki*. The body is at first deserted by everyone, but later it is laid out painted with white clay, exposed for several days, and finally wrapped in cloths and buried with the feet to the east. The funeral is attended by near relations and idlers generally; a goat is killed and half of it buried, the rest being eaten. Pots are broken on the grave and a semicircular hut is set up over it.

During the mourning which follows the village is deserted, and the inhabitants sleep for a time in the open; the hair is allowed to grow and cut only when parasites accumulate to an intolerable extent; women and men paint themselves as mentioned above.

After death the soul is supposed to wander about, and, if the grave is neglected it disturbs and may even cause the death of its relatives. Otherwise it takes the form of an animal; if a chief, of a large beast, but it may also wander about in the air.

Many ghost stories are told by the Bambala, some of which follow.

I had a friend named Molime, a man with many fetishes, well known as a great wood-carver throughout the country; many of the objects in the British Museum are by him, and I hope one day to get more specimens of his handiwork. Some years ago he died, and preparations were made for the funeral, but on the second morning he sat up and called for bread and palm-wine. The people assured him that he was dead and could not eat, but he threatened to kill them, so they brought what he wanted. Then he disappeared

GHOST STORIES

and entered the body of an elephant, but two months later the animal was killed and Molime on the self-same day reappeared in the village and lives there to this day. Since his assumed death he is the owner of a *kissi*, which is supposed to make anyone on whom it is sprinkled invisible. When the village is at war he and his whole family disappear in this way, and, unseen by the enemy, he kills many of them. One day the village was burnt down, and Molime, with the aid of his *kissi*, disappeared under the ground till the fire was over. I have the greatest respect for his cleverness.

My friend Muimbi has somewhat similar powers, for when he was captured by the village of Kolokoto he took some of his *kissi*, disappeared under the ground, to reappear some 800 yards away, and when the men of Kolokoto still kept up the pursuit he took the form of a rat, ran down a hole, and never came up till he got to his own village.

An inhabitant of Songo named Mokwach died in the fields some time ago, and his body was partly eaten by ants when he was found. They took him to the village, but when he was laid in his grave he moved and sat up and told the mourners that his brother had come to him and said, "I am dead and you are dead ; who will look after our wives ?" So he had decided to come back and live to a good old age. Thereupon the people made him many presents, and he is still in the land of the living, much respected by all. When Mohumbo of Kolokoto died the moon was nearly full ; he passed away at noon, and when evening

SUPERSTITION

came all the people could see him sitting in the sky with his pipe in his mouth and looking at the moon. He was recognised by everyone, and they even heard him say, "*Wakwa, wakwa.*"

The men who are reputed to have come back from the dead enjoyed much respect, but they were not held to be magicians, though they possessed powerful *kissi*, for every family has a store of this, which has been inherited. Magicians vary much in importance, and their prices in direct ratio. A noted practitioner may ask 1000 *djimbu* for a piece of minor magic, three or four times as much for an important piece of work. Mwana N'Gombe enjoys the greatest reputation among the Bambala, and he has three great talismans—a *mwen* (*Muri*) bracelet, an axe also called *mwen*, and a head-dress in which certain magical compounds are kept; it is ornamented with cowries, and he may not look at himself in a mirror, much less see the head-dress with the naked eye.

The ordinary name for things of magical power is *kissi*, but I have heard *kiluba* used in apparently the same sense. The magical image receives its power from the *kissi* applied by the magician, which is composed of clay or earth inherited from his maternal uncle. The family *kissi* may be used to make a line on the arm of a debtor which may not be removed till the debt is paid, and is believed to bring bad luck to the debtor.

For hunting the Bambala use bows and arrows. The former are of maple with a hollow back; the latter have one or more points of wood hardened in

TRIBAL WAR

the fire for small game ; for bigger animals war arrows with iron heads are used. Dogs are employed and are oftener cleverer than their masters ; a wooden rattle like a hawk bell is hung between their hind legs when game is being driven. When a man kills a bird he tries to sneak away without being observed so that he may consume his booty single-handed or rather single-mouthed.

There are two kinds of war—*Kutana* and *Gembi*. For the former an arena is cleared by burning the grass, but if anyone is killed in the encounter the great war, *gembi*, ensues, and then fighting goes on whenever the enemies come face to face. No quarter is given to the wounded, and every form of treachery is employed. In the *kutana* the warriors are armed only with bows and arrows and march in single file to the appointed spot ; after shouting insults at each other for a time they begin to shoot and sometimes attempt enveloping movements. They are dexterous in avoiding arrows, and as a rule there is little damage done.

If prisoners are taken they are secured with the *taka* or slave fork round the neck, and may be further fettered by having one hand fastened in the *kolombi*, a large log with a hole in it.

CHAPTER VI

A notorious rascal—An invaluable asset—Accumulating evidence—A barbarous custom—An exacting guest—Veiled hostility—Foul play—A young hopeful.

KOLOKOTO is a small village and does not possess more than one hundred inhabitants all told. Its chief, Kikungulu, is a wealthy man, who, at the death of his father some ten years ago, quitted his birthplace and founded his present abode; he and his brother, Matanda, are the chief personages of the district and take the lead in all important movements. He is a man of some forty years of age, tall and ill-favoured, his features being rendered still more repulsive by numerous open sores. He is hated throughout the country, but is credited with a great knowledge of magic and feared accordingly. He it is who, as a rule, administers the *putu* poison in the ordeal for witchcraft, and he has upon his head the blood of innumerable victims. To give an idea of his character, I may say that during my absence in the South he administered *putu* to his sister, an amiable and wealthy dame of about his own age, less because he believed she was a witch than for the sake of getting hold of her money. Even his own children held him in abhorrence, and one day one of his sons, of the

AN INVALUABLE ASSET

tender age of six, came to me with a request for European medicine with which to poison his father.

As soon as I got to Kolokoto I pursued my inquiries after a servant, for I had so far only one. Among the children playing about in the village I remarked a little boy about eight years old, who seemed to be exceptionally intelligent, and when I asked him if he would like to be my servant he said he would like it very much, but that he was a bondsman, and if he took service with me without the leave of Kikungulu he was afraid the latter would poison him. I went to the chief and discussed the matter with him, and when he saw that I was anxious to get the boy as my servant he made all kinds of objections, and stated that Meyey was a hostage for a large amount. He generously offered to dispose of his person if I would undertake to pay the debt in question, plus interest at the rate of several hundred per cent. In order to settle the matter I made an offer of a good deal less than he demanded and the bargain was struck.

Meyey was rather small for his age, and his head was remarkable for its extraordinary length. He took up his duties at once, and for the two years he stayed with me I never had a single cause of complaint against him. It is true I once boxed his ears; that, however, had nothing to do with the way in which he performed his duties, but was in his own interest, as I caught him learning gambling from the Bayaka. It will perhaps appear incredible to the European who does not know the

ACCUMULATING EVIDENCE

real African, but this boy for two years carried my keys and had access to all my property without once being guilty of the pettiest theft; he never told me a lie, and he was given to speaking his mind on every subject, regardless of the effect on the hearer, without fear; in fact the more unpleasant the home truth which he brought out the fiercer he looked.

His value to me in my ethnographical investigations it is impossible to overestimate. The native often refuses information, and in such cases I always explained to Meyey the point at issue, and left him to get at the facts. He often said nothing to me about it for days, but carried on his inquiries systematically till he was able to give me the information required. When I brought up the questions before the natives in order to verify the information thus obtained, I found that he had never failed to get to the bottom of them.

In this connection I may point out that it is fatal to put leading questions; inquiry on this basis is foredoomed to failure. If Meyey had described the burial customs of the Bambala to me, I sat down at the camp fire in the evening and began to chat about what I had heard from other tribes. I usually brought in the remark that the Bayanzi asserted of my hearers that they buried their dead sitting. If I had put the question to them directly, they would certainly have assured me that they did do so; but when it came to them as an affirmation of a neighbouring tribe



3

4

TYPES OF NATIVES

(1) Moyanzi youth with highly raised scars, tribal marks on the cheeks.

(2) The Bakwese are essentially a tribe of warriors and this is visible in every detail of their appearance. They are never found without having at least a knife sticking in the bands they wear as ornaments round their arms; they are always ready to use this too. Their dress and hair-dress is similar to those of the Southern Bambala, but they are less careful about their appearance and do not attach such great importance to it.

(3 and 4) The hair-dress of the Northern Bambala differs considerably from that of their Southern neighbours; when freshly arranged it looks like a "toque." The Southern Bambala let their hair grow to a considerable length, removing only three or five longitudinal lines with the razor. The remaining hair is plaited into ridges, and to give it an appearance of greater length, palm fibres are frequently plaited into the ends. Small nails with gilt tops are stuck into the ridges.

A BARBAROUS CUSTOM

they at once set to work to correct the false impression, and if any one gave me erroneous information his fellows quickly put him right. The thing to do is to provoke a discussion amongst the natives; in this way alone can reliable evidence be accumulated.

Early one morning I was disturbed by the firing of guns in the village, so I called Meyey and inquired what was happening. He informed me that some one was to be buried; I expressed my astonishment that I should not have heard of the death of anyone in the village, and inquired who had shuffled off this mortal coil. He replied that no one was dead, and when I asked him who was to be buried, he said "A man called Mokasa." "Where did he die?" I asked. "But he isn't dead," insisted Meyey. "You don't mean to say that they are going to bury him alive," said I laughingly, thinking there was some misunderstanding. "Certainly," said Meyey, "he will be buried alive: Kikungulu gave him *putu* (poison) yesterday, and proved that he had *moloki* (witchcraft) in him." I asked him quite coolly where the ceremony was to take place. He showed me a place about a hundred yards from my camp, and there through the bush I could distinguish a big crowd. I hurried to the spot, made my way to the centre of the crowd, and there I saw a good-looking grey-beard seated near the hole which was to be his grave. He was eating and drinking, and near him stood Kikungulu. I stepped up to the latter and in-

A BARBAROUS CUSTOM

quired whether it was true he was going to bury the man alive. When he said he certainly would do so, I clutched him by the neck and assured him that I would throttle him unless he handed over his prisoner. The crowd, already excited by the approaching event, began to grow aggressive, and it was only the fact that I held Kikungulu by the throat in a grip beneath which he was gradually growing grey, that prevented them from attacking me *en masse*. I freely confess that I was not altogether happy, and it was by no means unpleasing to me to see Meyey push his way through to me, my rifle in his hand. At last Kikungulu made signs that he yielded me his prisoner, and I released my hold. What was my surprise to find that the man for whom I had engaged on this somewhat desperate enterprise was absolutely passive; his pulse was normal, and he seemed to regard it as quite an ordinary thing that he should descend into the grave alive. Amid the hoots of the crowd, however, I marched him off and gave him his quarters in my camp, in the hope of securing him against further attempts.

After taking the precaution of administering an emetic to my protégé, in case there was still poison in his system, I got him to tell me his story. He said he was the chief of a village to the south-east of Kolokoto, where he had many wives and abundance of slaves, goats, and all kinds of wealth. His nephew, who, of course, according to African law, was his natural successor and heir, with an

AN EXACTING GUEST

eye to all these good things, had accused him of having caused the death of one of his children. Mokasa, strong in his innocence, denied the charge, but Mwana-N'Gombe, the great diviner of the neighbourhood, was called, and when he confirmed the accusation nothing remained for the accused but to submit himself to the poison ordeal. To this end he came to the village of Kolokoto; on the previous evening he had taken the poison, been declared guilty, and in consequence nearly suffered the penalty of the law, when I intervened. He assured me that he was innocent and that the poison had been adulterated to produce an appearance of guilt; and to prove his innocence he asked me to give him *putu* for the second time, convinced as he was that it could do him no harm if the ordeal were honestly carried out.

It was no easy matter to reconcile my men to Mokasa's presence in my camp; they objected in the strongest possible terms to my keeping *moloki* in their midst, and it was in vain that Meyey appealed to them to say whether I had ever told them a lie, or been mistaken. A further difficulty arose when it came to providing my guest with food; Mokasa was assured that if he took it from anyone in the village he would be poisoned; therefore I had to provide him with rice from my own private store; and when I had a fowl for him it was handed over alive to prevent any mishap.

My guest proved somewhat exacting; so far from being content to be in safety, he grumbled at being

DEATH OF MOKASA

obliged to do his work with his own hands, after having been a great chief and had numberless slaves. I should have been quite prepared to hire for him a body servant, as he desired, but unfortunately none of my boys was prepared to accept the position. My life after this adventure was unpleasantly diversified. Not only did all my boys, with the exception of Meyey and Bokala, desert me, but I was unable to go any distance from my camp without finding a few arrows whizzing about my ears. After a few days I found Mokasa strolling about outside the camp; I remonstrated with him and pointed out what risks he ran, but he only laughed and said no harm would come of it, and that besides he was tired of being cooped up all day. When I got back to the camp who should I find there but the nephew to whose machinations the whole affair was due. He had come to demand *kami-kumi* of me for having prevented his uncle from being killed. I did not comply with his demand, for it would have been an acknowledgment of having acted wrongly.

Mokasa extended his trips outside the camp every day, and at last, ten or twelve days after his rescue, he went out and never came back. I made inquiries in all directions without result, and his fate remained a mystery till four days later Meyey informed me that he had strayed too far and been clubbed to death by people from the village. From that day on I was no more molested so long as I remained in the neighbourhood, but the attitude

VEILED HOSTILITY

of the natives was one of veiled hostility. I had interfered with their customs and they could not forgive me for it. On the whole I am not prepared to say that they were wrong. Certain it is that anyone who three hundred years ago had ventured to interfere with the burning of a witch in Europe would have suffered far more severely than I did, even if he were not charged with the same offence and put to death with the original victim.

At this time I was already fluent in the Kimbala language, and could thus try to restore our old friendly relations by chats with anyone I happened to meet; I began with the women and children. After I had made some progress, Kikungulu went so far as to favour me with a visit, and brought with him one of his sons, six years of age, whom he offered me as a servant, saying that he wished him to be employed in the kitchen so that he might learn cooking and be thus available later for the entertainment of white visitors. I was only too happy to make peace, and I accepted his generous peace-offering. I never succeeded in learning the name of this boy, for he spoke exceedingly quickly, and all that I could understand of his name when he pronounced it was "Mrm," so by this name he was ever afterwards known.

Things went on quietly for a few days after this, and then happened an incident to which I attached no importance at the time, but which afterwards turned out to have been a serious attempt on my life. One morning my coffee tasted curiously bitter,

FOUL PLAY

so I summoned the cook, but he denied all knowledge of exceptional ingredients, and was ready to put his assertions to the proof by drinking the whole cupful. Some two hours afterwards he was attacked by severe griping pains, and came to me howling with pain, which I relieved by an emetic. An hour or two later I myself was attacked by the same symptoms, and relieved them in the same way; still I did not suspect any foul play. It was not till some months later, on my return from the south, that I learnt from the people of the village that the affair was an attempt on my life. "Mrm," incited by his father, had put poison in my coffee, and my escape was at least a narrow one. There was not the slightest doubt as to the correctness of the information, for on the very day on which my servant and I were taken ill "Mrm" disappeared without leaving a trace behind.

I have already mentioned that all my boys but two had deserted me. Soon after the poison incident I engaged a new servant. Hearing the piteous bleating of a goat in the bush I made my way to the spot to see what was happening, and found a youth engaged in skinning the animal which, from refinement or inadvertence, he had omitted to kill. I told him how extremely cruel it was, but my anger did not lead me to launch more than winged words at him, and they seemed to make but little impression. A few days later I was surprised to see this promising youth in my camp, and still more so to learn from him that his object in coming was to enter my

A YOUNG HOPEFUL

service. When I asked him what led to this idea, he replied, "Oh, the other day you know you were very angry with me, and, nevertheless, you did not hit me; you're the man for me; I want a master who will treat me well." This interesting young man, whose age was at most eight years, stayed with me for some twelve months; his disposition was lively; he had the greatest possible capacity for mischief, and he was always ready to apply himself to a job which there was no possibility of his accomplishing; for ordinary work he was not of the slightest use, for he displayed no such enthusiasm for it. If I had suggested to him to go and lead a wild elephant into the camp by its trunk, he would have set out full of confidence in his ultimate success; but if he was required to do no more than bring a bucket of water from the brook, he would set out reluctantly, and come back without the water, having forgotten his errand, and perhaps the bucket too before he arrived at the water-course.

His morals were, I regret to say, not of the highest; he was continually marrying fresh wives, who were perhaps six to eight years old, being beaten by them and then repudiating them. But not content with this he extended his field of operations to all the married women with whom he came in contact. He received many a box on the ear as a reward from the offended women; in revenge he made his way into the fowl-house of the scornful fair one and inflicted capital punishment on as many chickens as he could lay hands on. Needless to say,

A YOUNG HOPEFUL

I was far from anxious to retain him in my service ; but though I frequently dismissed him he never accepted notice ; he at any rate knew when he had got a good master. He was finally got rid of by being deported on a steamer to his own village as the sequel of an experiment with a small rodent which he caught. He attached straw and other inflammable material to it, set fire to it, and let it loose in the bush. Now, to put fire to a village bush is a serious offence in Africa, perhaps the greatest injury which can be inflicted on a village, so nothing remained but to repatriate him. It was only after I had sent him away that I discovered how fond I had really been of Kalala (for this was the name of the young rascal), but to do justice to his witticisms and joviality he must have a volume to himself. Here we must take our leave of him for the present.

CHAPTER VII

A trader's difficulties—Problems of Government—In the desert—Types of the Interior—Scarcity of food—A breach of trust—Native courtesy—Naïve sophistry.

WHEN my stay in Kolokoto had lasted about two months I began to make preparations for my journey into the southern country. But it was by no means all plain sailing, for the quarrel with the villagers did not make them any the more ready to offer their services; and the district into which I was going had the reputation of being poor country, where food was chiefly conspicuous by its scarcity. While the preparations for my journey were going on, a negro was sent to me by a European some distance away; the man, a Motetela, was brought in, bound hand and foot, by a guard of natives, with the request that I would forward him to the nearest magistrate (at Leopoldville!) for trial. It appeared that he had been among the servants of this European, and that during that time his wife had died; although the Batetela have no idea of *moloki*, in the sense of the Bambala, he had adopted the idea, and attributed her death to the evil influence of a young girl, upon whom he took his revenge by waylaying her one evening and killing her with his knife. Then he made his escape into the bush; as soon as his crime was discovered

A TRADER'S DIFFICULTIES

hue and cry was raised after him, the Batetela joining in the pursuit and finally catching the culprit. Although he was a man of their own blood and the victim was an alien woman, the Batetela would have lynched him but for the interference of the European; the latter rescued the man, sent him for trial, as mentioned above, and paid compensation to the murdered girl's village in order to prevent any disturbance.

I sent the prisoner on under the native guard to Kongo, where he was handed over to the captain and taken as far as Bandundu; the guard, who were also the witnesses, accompanied him, though their responsibility was now at an end; and on their evidence and the written declaration of the European the man was sentenced and hanged.

I mention this incident to show the difficulties under which a trader labours in the Congo. He has many men in his service, but he is not allowed to punish them; he may not even legally put them under arrest, though he is all the time responsible for any damage they may do or any complications which they may provoke. In a huge area like this it is impossible to have a sufficient number of magistrates, and by far the best thing would have been if the European had strung the man up in the village and made an example of him. This would, it is true, have been illegal; but so was my action in Kolokoto, where I was guilty of committing a common assault on Kikungula, whom I would, had I had the power, have hung with the greatest pleasure,

PROBLEMS OF GOVERNMENT

law or no law, to prevent him from doing any more mischief.

It must not be imagined, however, that I am an Anarchist, who holds that every man should do what is right in his own eyes. What would have been the result of my complaining to the magistrate of Kikungulu's conduct? The magistrate would have been bound to take notice of the charge; to arrest so important a man as Kikungulu, he would have had to avail himself of the military forces at his command; the country would have been alarmed; the people would have risen against the Europeans, and much bloodshed would have resulted from the endeavour to act in a judicial and orderly manner. Under the circumstances, therefore, I imagine that I did well to act according to my lights.

It must not be overlooked that there is another side to the question. If I or the European who arrested the Batetela had actually taken the law into our own hands to a greater extent than was actually the case, we should have been moved thereto by the desire to act justly and put down evil-doing. But it by no means follows that all Europeans would be influenced by similar motives; on the contrary, it is very possible that some would only do so to gratify private spite. On the whole, therefore, it is perhaps just as well that the European stands in fear of the magistrate, and will not go beyond a certain point, and be debarred from taking the law into his own hands.

DIFFICULTIES

It argues a somewhat curious view of human nature to lay down that witnesses may only be interviewed and justice allowed to pursue its normal course if the parties are not disposed to offer resistance. What a London policeman would say to a magistrate who reproved him for using force in arresting a dangerous prisoner I do not know, but the public would doubtless take a very sound view of the question.

In this connection I must call attention to the fact that in the Congo witnesses do not recognise their obligations. They do not attend when they are summoned, and the man who goes to summon them is attacked; so is the magistrate who attempts to interview them. If, therefore, the objection of prisoners to be arrested and of witnesses to be compelled to give testimony is not to be allowed to upset the whole machinery of justice, it is absolutely essential that the magistrate should have sufficient force at his back and should not hesitate to use it whether the resisters be simple witnesses or the actual criminals.

It is very easy to sit at home in Europe and criticise men who go with their lives in their hands into lands where they are outnumbered by the natives many thousand times. People are only too ready to judge by the result and do not appreciate the cruel dilemmas in which a white man may be placed. Take, for example, the case of Lieutenant V., who some years ago settled down peacefully in a village of the Lomami with some thirty soldiers. One day

A DILEMMA

the villagers attacked him and his men, massacred the latter and held the officer a prisoner. There was no reason for the commencement of hostilities, save that the tribe was very martial and their warriors were spoiling for a fight. Captain Derclaye, now unhappily no more, was in the neighbourhood with more than a hundred men, and he naturally marched to the relief of his comrade. When he was approaching the village a message reached him to the effect that if he would retire and give his word not to inflict any punishment for the aggression the lieutenant would be handed over unharmed.

Now consider the captain's position. If he marched on the village and failed to effect a rescue he would be told that his rashness was the cause of his comrade's death. If, on the other hand, he retired only to find that the promise was not carried out, his whole life would be ruined by a charge of cowardice. He knew that he could not trust the natives, but nevertheless he resolved to accept the offer, and happily all turned out well; but it was a cruel dilemma, and arm-chair philosophers do not sufficiently appreciate the problems which the white man has to face and solve, whether in Africa or in any country where he is one against many.

For my journey to the South the chief desideratum was carriers. I finally accumulated a sufficient number by promising them that they need only go as far as Mosonge, approximately the frontier of Bambala land, where I hoped to replace them by Bayaka. I started with about twenty men, taking

IN THE DESERT

only the most necessary things, about 400 lb. weight in all.

From Kolokoto the country rises steadily for about an hour's march till the great plateau is reached which forms so great an obstacle to communication even for the natives themselves. It extends some seven hours' march north-east to south-west, a barren, flat expanse of sand with patches of thin grass less than 2 feet high. In the whole area of 400 square miles there is, so far as I know, but one single tree, which is visible from every part of the plateau; beneath it are the remains of hundreds of camp fires, for it affords the only shade from the burning rays of the sun, which, reflected from the surface of the sand, are so powerful that the Bambala traders in fowls and pigs lose half of their stock in the short journey from Kolokoto to the Bayaka country. There are no birds to be seen there; no animals, not even rats, find any subsistence; the only living inhabitants of this desert are aggressive brown flies, which settle on white man, black man, goat, or dog indiscriminately to suck their blood. Meyey tried at first to drive them away from me, but at last even he gave it up, saying they were too much for him.

As a rule the natives whisk away the flies as they march in single file, each from the man in front of him; on the occasion of my march over the plateau the only exception to this rule was afforded by Kalala, the little scamp, who marched along, his hands in the pockets of a remarkably primitive pair of trousers, enjoying the sufferings of a big man in front of him.

A NATIVE HUT

My men were much inconvenienced by want of water. I had, it is true, entrusted a demi-john full of the precious liquid to a carrier at the start, but he carefully emptied it without giving me a hint of his intention, and when he was taxed with his misdeed he thought it was sufficient to say that the jar was much lighter empty, as no doubt it was.

About four in the afternoon we reached Punza, on a tributary of the Gobari, just below the edge of the plateau. I was sorry to find that there was very little food to be had here, and I was compelled to distribute to my men the flesh of two goats which I was taking with me for breeding purposes. For want of carriers I had been forced to leave my tent behind and was obliged to lodge in a filthy native hut, the atmosphere of which was rendered quite unbreathable by the exceptional industry of Kalala. Taking a palm branch, in native fashion, he tore off the green part, leaving only the mid-ribs, which he bound up, forming a flat broom. With this he carefully swept the walls of the hut, on which had accumulated the soot of many generations of fires, and raised such a dust that I felt absolutely choked.

Perhaps it may be as well to offer an explanation to my readers at this point. I always spoke the native languages with my boys, and when I report their remarks I simply translate them into English, though I am well aware that a more amusing effect would be produced if I made use of pidgin English. But it is my endeavour to show the native as he is,

TYPES OF THE INTERIOR

and no report of a conversation in pidgin English could give anything like a true impression. For a work like the present, which does not aspire to be a serious contribution to science except in a very small way, it seems better to give a straightforward translation of a conversation. I need hardly say that I regard the use of pidgin English or pidgin French in scientific works with the utmost contempt. As a means by which to acquire anthropological information of value it is simply unworthy of notice. An anthropologist should of all people seek to reflect the mind of the people whom he describes, but pidgin English is a distorted mirror which metamorphoses the image it reflects.

After leaving Punza we were still in sandy bush country, but as it was traversed by several water-courses marching was less trying for the carriers and more pleasant for myself. The population was still Bambala, but it was a very different physical type from the River-Bambala. The men of the interior are much lighter in build, less bony, and quicker in their movements. The red-clay paint begins to be general, and they dress their hair in five longitudinal ridges, plaited and oiled. From the centre of the forehead, along the temples and down behind each ear, runs a plait of false "hair," composed of palm-leaf fibre.

It is worthy of note that cannibalism is much less frequent in the "poor country" here, than it was farther to the north; only isolated individuals are addicted to the practice, and it finally disappears

KWILU'S HAMLET

completely near the Lukula, the southern boundary of the northern Bambala.

After three days' further march I arrived at Mosonge. My carriers were in great fear that I should detain them, but having given my word I naturally let them go, to their great satisfaction. Mosonge is a little village, or rather three little villages, each under an independent chief. I took up my abode in the one belonging to chief Kwilu, who was good enough to sell me, for a small consideration, one of his huts, the occupant of which he turned out and compelled to build a fresh mansion for himself. My first care was to enlarge the door of my house, for I should otherwise have been unable to creep in without risking a broken neck every time.

Kwilu's hamlet consisted of at most seven or eight huts. Those of his three wives, in which he resided alternately, formed a separate enclosure with a cactus hedge, the entrance to which only permitted one person to pass at a time. The particular cactus used is a most convenient plant for such purposes, for it suffices to break the leaves off a branch, stick each separately into the ground, and await results; in six months you have a fine hedge, impenetrable, less on account of its strength than because of its poisonous qualities.

In the middle of the smaller enclosure stood Kwilu's forge, for he was a blacksmith by trade, and a very clever one too. He was an excellent fellow, with whom I was always on the best of terms; but unfortunately the poverty of the land was such that

SCARCITY OF FOOD

he was unable to supply me with food after the first two or three days. My European food was at Kongo and could not be forwarded, or rather, thanks to the negligence of a European, was not forwarded.

In this part of the country very few chickens are reared, and it so happened that those who owned fowls were, while I was there, more anxious to keep them than to make a profit out of the sale of them. All my efforts, therefore, failed to secure a larger supply than one chicken a fortnight, and this I found insufficient for my modest needs. I became, therefore, a vegetarian by necessity, and lived for two months mainly on native bread, made from cassava. On one of my excursions I found some plantains in Putumbumba, and opened negotiations for the purchase of the plants; at a cost of about ten shillings worth of cloth I secured three plants, the fruit of which was then getting ripe. A week or so later I sent over, a march of three hours in each direction, for my produce, and this little excursion was repeated at intervals of about a week, till the bunches were all gone. It is a testimony to native honesty that my property in the fruit was respected, although it would have been difficult for me to discover marauders at such a distance from my camp.

Game was exceedingly scarce; in fact, all that came to hand was an occasional pigeon, and when one visited a plantation a messenger came post haste to inform me. I sallied out with my shot-gun, but instead of sending Meyey to put it up I stalked it; as, in better days, I had stalked rhinoceros and elephants,

A BREACH OF TRUST

and shot it sitting, I blush to say ; but then, as Meyey used to say to me, "You looked so hungry when you went after the pigeon." The genius of the party in such matters was Kalala. The native has under ordinary circumstances an instinct which tells him which way a hunted animal is going, and permits him to cut off corners and take the chord of an arc. Kalala had this instinct to an incredible degree ; and, impossible as it may appear, was literally able to tell me on which tree a pigeon wheeling in the air was going to settle.

I have already mentioned that there is a trade in live stock from North to South ; but the produce was usually bought up at enormous prices before it penetrated to the part in which I was. A village or several villages would club together to purchase a goat, which would be cut up, as soon as it was bought, into equal shares, skin, flesh, intestines, and bones counting equally, among the shareholders.

On one occasion Kalala committed a grave breach of trust, which resulted in open war between him and Meyey, and the final defeat of the latter. Hearing that a party was in the neighbourhood which had a fowl to sell, Kalala sallied forth privily and purchased a creature about the size of a European pigeon, composed of little more than skin and bone, at a cost of about two shillings. Instead of bringing this into my camp as his duty required, he secretly cooked it in the bush and regaled himself in private. His iniquity was exposed by Meyey, who discovered him sucking the bones, and reproached him with his dis-

NATIVE ETIQUETTE

loyalty, pointing out that I stood in far greater need of animal food than he did, and should have had the option of buying in the delicious tit-bit.

I took no part in Meyey's quarrel with Kalala over the great fowl question. I regretted his defeat; but, in my heart of hearts, though I did not tell him so, I sympathised with Kalala who, at any rate, gave evidence of acuteness which was likely to lead to a future of prosperity.

Although I had nothing to eat I had my table laid each day with the utmost care—spotless linen, knives and forks, plates, dishes, &c., garnished the festive board, and when the cassava bread was put on the table Meyey announced with gravity that would have done honour to the most aristocratic butler, that I was served. Native etiquette forbids the presence of spectators when an important person is eating, and naturally my meals were taken in the presence of my body servant alone. My portion of water was not far short of a gallon a day, and naturally drinks between meals were necessary to get through this allowance. Now this is not so simple a matter as it seems. It is a native custom when anyone drinks for all present to sit down on the ground and to lower modestly their eyes. Sometimes when I went into the interior all the people of the surrounding villages came to see me, and if I raised my glass to my mouth they never failed to drop to the ground with one accord; if by chance anyone failed to carry out this duty of politeness, his neighbours did not fail to recall him to his senses with a vigorous nudge.

NATIVE COURTESY

Some European travellers ridicule native customs of this sort, and endeavour to persuade their visitors that it is unnecessary for them to practise such politeness in their presence. As a matter of fact, such a man simply lowers himself in the natives' eyes. A native will comply with such a request with pleasure, but he thinks to himself that his visitor has no manners, precisely as a European would do of a man who persists in disregarding some well-known rule of politeness.

I have mentioned that my European supplies failed to reach me; the loss which I felt most was that of my tobacco, which I smoke only in cigarettes. Native tobacco takes the form of dried leaves; and, when I came to the end of my stock, the faithful Meyey, without saying anything to me, invested some of his wages in native tobacco, and set to work to cut it up to resemble the European product as nearly as possible. Of course I discovered the difference, though the resemblance was considerable, and increased as Meyey grew more skilful; I was curious to see what would happen. One day he came to me with a despairing face, and said: "There is no more tobacco; I haven't a single penny left to buy any more." I asked him how he had bought it up till then, and he said quite simply: "From my ration money and my wages." "But why did you not ask me for money?" "Oh, what's mine is yours, you know; so there was no need." Although he shared his possessions with me, Meyey for his part did not carry his communism when my goods were con-

NAIVE SOPHISTRY

cerned further, than to speak of my gun as "our gun," or my table as "our table." Unwilling to deprive him of the pleasure of having made me a present, I did not offer to repay the money he had spent on his purchase of tobacco; but I naturally took care that, at the first opportunity, he received a present which amply made up for the self-denial he had practised.

It was out of the question to think of building a house in Mosonge; there was neither wood nor clay to be had. But I managed to engage a man to execute repairs to my hut, and generally make himself useful. The first morning he set to work with great *élan* at about 6 A.M., but at 7 A.M. he had unaccountably disappeared. I went to the village to see what had happened, and found him drinking palm-wine. I inquired what brought him there, and he coolly replied, "Ami kunya makana lo?" (Do you think I never drink palm-wine?) He was persuaded to return a little later, but at about half-past nine he again disappeared. I again went in quest of him and found him at rest upon a mat. This time he explained that it was getting rather warm, and he thought it was better to wait till evening before he returned to his labours.

The next morning he did not come at all, so I sallied forth a third time in search of the truant. I discovered him in his hut, and he explained the situation in this wise: "You see, you were angry yesterday, because I left work to get a drink when I was thirsty; to-day, I think, it is better to wait till I am

NAIVE SOPHISTRY

thirsty, so that I can drink first and then go to my work." Under these circumstances I thought it better to deny myself the honour of having him in my employment; though, even if there were an Employers' Liability Act in the Congo, I ran little risk of his meeting with an accident during the time he was engaged fulfilling his contract with me.

All my efforts to obtain carriers were fruitless. I resolved to start for the South with Meyey and Bokale, leaving Kalala in charge of my possessions at Mosonge. Meyey carried a blanket, soap, and tooth-brush; Bokale had a frying-pan, a few goods for trading with the natives, a knife for my use; and, as insignia of office, his big cook's knife stuck in his girdle. And so I left for the unknown South, trusting in Providence and Meyey, who assured me that he had been with his father to the Lukula about a year before, and thus knew the way.

CHAPTER VIII

An affianced lover—The Bayaka tribe—Manners and customs—Communal customs—Burial rites—Folk-lore.

THE first day's march took us to Kisai, a village of the Basamba, probably one of the earliest Bantu populations of the country. Their settlements extend over an enormous area in proportion to the population; for each village is formed of so many separate hamlets of two or three huts and surrounded by natural hedges (the residence of a single polygynous family), with intervening tracts of bush, 20 yards or more in breadth, traversed by narrow paths. It is impossible to say what was the original reason for this curious arrangement; at the present day it certainly forms an excellent defence against the aggressive Bambala and Bayaka neighbours, with whom the Basamba are never on better than cool terms. On my very first visit to the village I was talking to the chief, when suddenly cries were heard in the distance and all the men, including the old chief, snatched up bows and arrows and made off in the direction of the alarm. When they returned an hour later, it appeared that the Bambala had tried to lift the goats of an outlying hamlet and had been driven off again. It is obviously difficult to get the better of such a village; it is like street fighting in civilised countries, where each house

AN AFFIANCED LOVER

has to be captured separately; and in addition in Congoland the invader suffers from the disadvantage of being the target of invisible enemies familiar with the intricacies of the paths.

I offered to remonstrate on their behalf with the Bambala, but the old chief thanked me and said that he was confident of his ability to hold his own. I may here remark that I was always on the best of terms with the Basamba, but quite failed to make any progress in my investigations into their customs. Communication between us was carried on in Kimbala, and as soon as I trenched on ethnographical questions they forgot their Kimbala or had a pressing engagement elsewhere.

The old chief was on especially friendly terms with me, so much so that he was very desirous to make me his daughter's affianced lover. The young lady was at the time in question four years of age; but engagements in the Congo are never postponed because the parties are too young. I accepted his flattering proposal; for the only obligations which such an engagement imposed were, firstly, to bring a present to my fiancée whenever I came to the village, and, secondly, to do the same for her father. The duties, in fact, are all on the other side, save for these, for breach of promise actions against a man are unknown; but the girl may not marry another man unless the preferred lover is prepared to pay an enormous fine, possibly nine or ten goats.

I, as in duty bound, offered a suitable present to my future father-in-law, and he in return gratified me

THE BAYAKA TRIBE

by the gift of his wig, an object made of palm-fibre, but so well smeared with soot and oil as to appear absolutely natural, as all may see who care to visit it at its resting-place in the British Museum. My fiancée took the matter very seriously. Whenever I visited the village she came up to me and never quitted my side, trying to make herself as useful to me as possible, as a foretaste of her capacity for wifely duties.

After leaving this village I came to a Bambala settlement, the same that had made an inroad on Kisai; here I saw the first goyava trees. Warlike preparations were made, for they mistook me for a Basamba expedition of revenge; but when they saw I was a European they laid aside their weapons and received me very kindly. The country was still rising at this village and for some distance beyond, in fact, as far as the Yee River, where I saw the first Bayaka.

The Bayaka have been settled on the Kwango for centuries, for they are mentioned by early travellers. Many authors have confused the Kiamfu, the chief of the Bayaka, with Muata Yamvo, ruler of the Balunda, and it has often been stated that they were once tributary to the state of Lunda; this is, however, doubtful. The eastern Bayaka seem to be rebels against the Kiamfu and are ruled by a chief called Muri Kongo; this title of Muri seems to be merely honorary. His subjects seem to have migrated still farther eastwards and to have formed the enclave on the right bank of the Kwilu, as well as the com-



MOURNING

Mourning may be expressed in different ways according to the tribe the mourner belongs to, and also according to the degree of relationship to the deceased. Sometimes the whole body is besmeared with clay of a certain colour, sometimes only the chest or the arms. It is usual for mourners to let their hair grow until the period of mourning is over.



KEEN TRADERS

Marketing is one of the duties of the woman in the Congo; it is also one of her great pleasures. All blacks can be said to be born traders, but women by far excel the men. To "do" someone over a bargain is the greatest of pleasures, and cannot be bought too dear.

THE BAYAKA TRIBE

munities extending north-east from the upper waters of the Gufu or Kafi.

The Bayaka are smaller than the Bambala, lightly built, with refined features. In colour they seem to be somewhat lighter than the Bambala, whom they resemble in eyes, nose, and lips.

Both sexes shave the head so as to leave three ridges running from front to back; the remaining hair is plaited, three strands together, but as it is very short a needle is generally used in the operation. Two tresses, starting from the centre of the forehead, are plaited with grass and run behind each ear. The men allow the beard to grow, but shave the moustache.

The chief garment is a loin-cloth of palm-fibre made in one piece and supported by a girdle of straw; it is often dyed with *tukula* wood; the border is turned up and hemmed with palm-fibre thread; the needles are native made, and the hole is manufactured not by perforation but by bending back the head and welding the join. Only old men wear any covering for the head, but both sexes wear on the back a goat-skin as a protection against rain.

Both sexes paint the chest with *tukula* wood, and the dead are similarly treated, in each case with the idea of increasing beauty. The incisors are sometimes knocked out or filed to a V-shaped point, but neither tattoo nor raised scars are at all common. Women tie string over their breasts in order to flatten them.

Necklets of European beads or monkey-teeth, large anklets of brass, and brass or copper armlets are worn, and the latter are so large that they can be

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

removed without bending them. Men who have killed an enemy wear an iron bracelet, and at dances men wear a skin in front of their girdles; women ornament their hair with beads.

The Bayaka do not eat the flesh of dogs, but almost anything else is welcomed; fowls, eggs, and food cooked in a pot that has been used for a fowl are forbidden to women, who are supposed to become mad and tear off their clothes if they violate the prohibition. Even men must observe certain customs in eating poultry; a hen may be shared by several, but a cock must be consumed by one man or illness will result; a son not yet circumcised may, however, partake of a cock with his father. As with all the Kongo tribes, milk is not used as food. The Bayaka do not practise cannibalism under any circumstances.

The agriculture of the Bayaka is much the same as that of the Bambala, but there are no forests in their country, and the same plot of ground is planted for several years in succession. Manioc exhausts the ground, but maize and ground-nuts can be set year after year; the tobacco gardens are, as with the Bambala, within the village.

The huts differ only in one respect from those of the Bambala; they have a doorway some five feet high with a threshold on the level of the ground. The village is often small, consisting of not more than two or three huts, but they are usually so close together that it is difficult to say where one begins and another ends; the major axis of the village generally runs north and south, but the door may face in

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

any direction. It is the business of the chief to sweep out his village each morning, but pigs and dogs are chiefly responsible for the work of scavenging. Married women have, of course, each her own hut, and unmarried men have a hut where several live together. Sometimes in front of a hut a semicircle of sticks is seen connected by strings from which other sticks are hanging; this is an indication that the son of the house has been circumcised and is living in retirement in the bush for a time.

Trade with the Bayaka is much the same as with the Bambala, save that the former export rubber. Male slaves are worth three times as much as among the Bambala, and a goat is also nearly three times as valuable. As with the Bambala in case of debt, the goods of traders of the same tribe as the defaulter may be seized in satisfaction.

Adult males are the only holders of property; and water does not in this tribe belong to anyone. A debtor may be seized as a bondsman and his debts discharged by his heir, his eldest brother, even if there is no property to inherit. If there is no brother and no son by a sister, one of the slaves of a dead man inherits his property and becomes a free man.

The hunting-grounds are private property, and the owner of the land receives a leg of each animal killed; the game belongs to the slayer, but, in fact, all partake of it.

The eastern Bayaka are all under Muri Kongo, who regards them all as his slaves; they prostrate themselves on entering his presence and beat their

COMMUNAL CUSTOMS

breasts. His power is absolute and he has no advisers, though each village is administered by a petty chief who is succeeded by his heir. Muri Kongo determines what tribute shall be paid and is his own tax-gatherer. Succession to the head chieftainship is the same as for property, and when the sister's son is a minor his father or mother acts as his guardian, though women cannot in their own person succeed to the chieftaincy.

A boy belongs to the village of his maternal uncle, and removes thither at the age of five or later; only blood relatives and women who marry villagers are admitted into the village community. If an alien asks to be received or even begs for food he or she is immediately seized and sold as a slave, the proceeds being divided among the free adult males. The villages being so small, and frequently the outcome of growth of a single family, it is natural that the members should regard themselves as of kin to each other. Relationship on the female side is considered to be closer than that on the male side.

Marriage with the Bayaka is always by purchase, and the price is 10,000 *djimbu*; the father of the bride must pay a goat to his chief because the bride goes out of the village. The woman follows her husband, and he has absolute power over her, but consent is necessary on her part before she can be married. If a woman is divorced she is free to marry again unless she has been guilty of adultery; but the second husband must pay the bride price back to the first. If the wife dies before giving birth to a girl

COMMUNAL CUSTOMS

her father must repay the bride price. Widows may return to their families, but if they remarry the bride price must be repaid to the heir of the dead husband.

A man who can afford it has more than one wife, and all have equal rights, each having a separate hut for herself and her children. Slaves must marry slaves and free men must marry free women; even slave concubines are forbidden to free men.

Slavery is universal, and the slaves receive very little consideration. They cannot possess property, and therefore cannot redeem themselves. Prisoners of war are on the same footing as ordinary born slaves; but debtors are as with the Bambala bondsmen rather than slaves.

After the birth of a child the mother must remain in the hut for a time; the father kills a fowl, which is afterwards eaten, and sprinkles some of the blood on the house god. The chief of the wife's village gives ten fowls to the father for a male child, twenty for a female child. A father may neither kill nor sell his child as a slave. In most villages the care of children seems to fall to the father, and the men generally seem very fond of their children. For a year after its birth a child must not be washed, and the father must also abstain from his ablutions.

As soon as the boy is circumcised he becomes a man, even if he is no more than eight years old; as such he is a warrior and has to go to war. When an expedition is proposed the men are summoned

WEAPONS AND PRISONERS

by the beating of gongs, and the wife of the chief liberally decorated with red paint stands in the middle of the village. Each warrior has to shoot an arrow between her legs, and omens are drawn from their marksmanship; if the arrow falls between her feet the expedition will not be successful; if it passes through the omen is good; the unsuccessful marksman must remain at home.

Practically the only weapons are bows and arrows, but farther east swords are in general use too. The bow is made of a kind of maple; it is nearly 5 feet long and 2 to 4 inches broad. In shooting the bamboo string is held with two fingers with the arrow between. At short distances up to thirty feet they are good marksmen. The arrows have iron heads and are notched and feathered.

An attack is usually prefaced by mutual abuse, but ambushes and night attacks are not unknown. Hence sentries are posted all round a village in war time.

Prisoners are sold as slaves, and if they are wounded time is given for the wounds to heal. If a man is killed on the Bayaka side, the arrow which gave the death wound must not be broken but cut out and stuck through the centre of the roof of his brother's hut.

Alliances are frequently contracted between village chiefs, and peace is made in the following manner: chiefs of the two villages meet and eat a cake in which they put some of their nail parings; then a fowl is killed, wrapped in leaves and buried, and the cere-

BURIAL RITES

mony is over. It is believed that he who breaks the truce will die.

Unlike many Kongo tribes, the Bayaka accept illness as a cause of death, but trials for witchcraft are not unknown among them. Relatives and friends surround a dying man, but only the nearest relations attend the funeral. The corpse is painted red and arranged in a sitting posture with the knees under the chin and the hands clasped beneath the knees; food is put at its side in the grave, and the earth is filled in. A small straw hut is erected over the grave, and all the pots owned by the deceased are broken and thrown upon the grave. No weapons must be buried with the dead; for if they were the ghost would visit the heir on three successive nights, and on the fourth night kill him. Widows while in mourning are painted red and not allowed to plait their hair.

The Bayaka are born gamblers, so much so that some chiefs prohibit games of chance in their villages and put as a sign a small palm leaf upon a tree in the middle of the village. The favourite game is played with a small basket and a number of wooden discs flat on one side, rounded on the other. They are thrown out, and the thrower wins if most fall flat side up.

The Bayaka do not dance, sing, or tell stories before foreigners, and it is only by chance that one gains any information on any of these points. As a specimen of their folk-lore the following story will serve.

FOLK-LORE

The story is related by a single individual, the audience joining in the chorus. In explanation it should be said that the word *kongo* means "hunt"; *ayeye* is merely an exclamation, and the spoken *bekelek bekelek bugumun* is supposed to imitate the sound made by fallen wood.

One day, a long time ago, a monkey, in his rambles among the branches of the trees, wandered farther from his home than was his custom. At last he arrived at a place in the forest where he had never been before; and what did he see there?

CHORUS.

Allegretto.

Kongo kongo kongo kongo kongo a - ye - ye

Kongo kongo kongo kongo kongo a - ye - ye

Mama mama bewula. Mama mama bewula.

(Spoken in a low voice very fast)—

Bekelek bekelek bugumun, bekelek bekelek bugumun, bekelek bekelek bugumun.

Home he ran and said to the other monkeys: "Oh, my brothers, I have seen something horrible! I was in a part of the forest where I saw tree falling after tree, and although I looked about in every direction I could not discover what made

FOLK-LORE

them fall like that." "Small trees?" asked the other monkeys. "No," replied the first, "big ones, the biggest in the forest." The monkeys were greatly surprised. "Are you sure that you saw no one felling them?" "Certainly, there was no one there, and the trees were falling, falling, falling."

(Chorus.)

The monkeys, unable to understand how this was possible, went to see the jackal, who had the reputation of being very sly. "I'll go and see," said the jackal. So he went, and there he too saw the trees falling, falling, falling, but could discover no cause why they should fall like that. So back he went to the monkeys and said, "I could see nobody who made them do so, but I saw the trees falling, falling, falling."

(Chorus.)

Then said the jackal, "Let us go to the leopard, he might be able to discover the explanation." So they went and told their story to that cunning animal. "I'll go and see," said the leopard. So he went, and there he too saw the trees falling, falling, falling, but could discover no cause why they should fall like that. So back he went to the monkeys and jackal and said, "I could see nobody who made them do so, but I saw the trees falling, falling, falling."

(Chorus.)

FOLK-LORE

Then said the leopard, "Let us go to the lion; that mighty animal is sure to be able to advise us." So they all went and told their story to the mighty lion. "I'll go and see," said the lion. So off he went, and saw the trees falling, falling, falling, but could not discover what made them fall like that. So back he went to the other animals, and said, "I could see nobody who made them do so, but I saw the trees falling, falling, falling."

(Chorus.)

Then said the lion, "Let us go to the wise elephant; he is the wisest of all the animals, and he will certainly be able to discover what makes the trees fall." So they went to the elephant and related their story. "I'll go and see," said the elephant. But he was no more successful than the others, and when he returned he said, "I have looked to the right, to the left, behind me, before me, but could see no one who might be the cause why all the trees were falling, falling, falling."

(Chorus.)

All the animals were very unhappy, "What shall we do," said they, "if all the forest is destroyed?" Then up spoke the cat, who had just arrived, "Let me go and see what is happening; perhaps I shall be able to discover what is the matter." All the animals laughed at the cat. "What!" said they; "the sly jackal, the cunning leopard, the mighty lion, the wise elephant, all

FOLK-LORE

have failed; do you think that you, a cat, will be successful?" "Only let me go," said the cat, "at least no harm can come of it." So off he went, and soon returned with a rat in his mouth. So the cat was the saviour of the forest, for the trees did not fall any more.

(*Chorus.*)

CHAPTER IX

Survival of the fittest—A blind boy—A costly habit—Collecting a vocabulary
—An amateur sportsman—Taken unawares—A fine haul—Bayaka
fetishes—Return to Mosonge—Exploring the interior.

ON the Yee River is situated a small Bayaka village which is commonly called Yee, though it has another name. At the entrance I saw a roughly constructed gallows on which hung a dead dog. I learned later that he was a notorious thief, who was in the habit of making marauding expeditions among the fowls; he had, therefore, been strung up as a public example.

My arrival did not seem to cause any particular excitement. In the middle of the village stood a man singing at the top of his voice and accompanying himself upon that very pleasing instrument, a friction drum, which, from its delightful tone, is known in Germany as a "wood-devil." The chief, as usual, came to meet me, and we were soon on good terms. The village does not consist of more than about twenty huts. Among the inhabitants is, singular to say, a boy who was born blind; of course by the Congo tribes cripples and others with bodily deformities are, as a rule, put out of the way at once; the Bayaka alone are an exception. This small boy, whose name was Peta, was a universal favourite; he wandered about the village never

A BLIND BOY

running up against any obstruction, recognised people, addressing them by name, and generally conducted himself like a person in full enjoyment of his sight. It was not, of course, remarkable that he should recognise me, for I was the only wearer of boots for many miles; but that he should be able to distinguish the step of barefooted individuals seemed to me more than a little surprising. Peta was an object of pity, and this, too, is exceptional. A man in the same village who suffered from deafness was simply the butt of the whole village. I presented Peta with a bell which was, and probably still is, a source of infinite pleasure to him; he wandered round the village ringing it, and whenever I returned he was always at the entrance to the village waiting for me with his bell, which he rang with the remark that he had not broken it yet.

The chief apologised to me for being unable to offer me a present on my arrival, but promised to go into one of the neighbouring villages to secure a fowl; the transaction occupied some three hours—a striking illustration of the poverty of the country.

I had not the slightest difficulty in maintaining satisfactory relations with the inhabitants of this village, as with the Bayaka generally. In the beginning of 1906 the newspapers of Europe contained accounts of a Bayaka rising near the Kwango (parent branch), which resulted in the death of several white men. The Government, hearing of the massacre, sent down troops and arrested the Kiamfu

A COSTLY HABIT

(chief), but I have every reason to believe that the Bayaka were in fault only because they took the law into their own hands and acted under great provocation, for an agent of a Company had made some unreasonable demands, which the Kiamfu had refused; thereupon the official threatened to mutilate the chief, who it must be understood is a man of enormous influence and very great wealth. His subjects were naturally highly excited at the insult, and rose against the whites with the result recorded in the newspapers.

As an illustration of the wealth of the Kiamfu, I may here relate a story told of his predecessors, to whom he was equal in wealth and superior in humanity. Like the *nouveau riche* who lights his cigar with a five pound note in order to display his wealth, in former days the Kiamfu, when he rose from a sitting position, did so with the aid of two slaves, one on either side, into whose backs he stuck a knife. How many times a day the Kiamfu was in the habit of rising from his seat I cannot say, but the practice must have caused the death of at least half a dozen slaves a day and cost more than £2000 a year.

The arrest of the Kiamfu was smartly carried out by Lieutenant Danniels, with the help of a bugler Bobbo, both of whom shall meet again. The Government despatched Danniels with a wholly inadequate force to make the arrest. He marched on the village and sent for the Kiamfu to come and see him. He came, and Bobbo, the strongest man



A FISH FROM THE CONGO

Some of the fish in the Congo and its affluents are so big that it requires two men to carry them. There is great sport to be had with these fish.



BAMBALA DOORWAYS

The doorway of the Bambala hut is a small oblong opening. There is a special knack of getting into a hut, and the stranger who has not yet acquired this sometimes finds himself unable to get in or out. The huts of the Southern Bambala compare favourably with those of many tribes as far as space and cleanliness are concerned.

COLLECTING A VOCABULARY

in the detachment of thirty men, was deputed to jump on him and hold him down, while the rest formed square and kept the people at a distance. In this way the capture was effected without bloodshed. When I left for Europe the prisoner was just about to undergo his trial.

In Yee, as in all Bayaka villages, I sat down before my hut, a crowd round me, with whom I discussed the habits and customs of the country. My first care in the Bayaka country was to collect a vocabulary. As I was near the Bambala frontier most people understood, more or less, Kimbala; and if one of my informants made a mistake, the others were always ready to correct him. In order to stimulate public interest I provided myself with a packet of sewing-needles; and when I asked in Kimbala the Bayaka name of some object, the first man to give it received a needle; if, however, he told me a wrong word, he had to surrender one of those previously earned, and the reward went to the man who corrected him. Thus I accumulated my vocabulary at a cost of about twopence. I now set myself to learn the words off by heart; that done, I listened to their conversations among themselves, for it is their custom to simplify their discourse when they are talking to a foreigner in order to make it more comprehensible to him. In a short time I was able to follow their discussions with ease.

Sometimes our nightly gatherings were interrupted by a woman's screams coming from the bush some distance away. They told me that it must be some

AN AMATEUR SPORTSMAN

woman whose child was ill, and who adopted this way of driving away *moloki*, to whom she attributed the illness.

I left Yee for Zange, distant about five hours, and our march led us across two rivers, about 20 feet broad, whose beds lay respectively 800 and 1000 feet below the level of the plateau, which was still rising. These little streams, named Kipokoko and Kibange, are marvellously clear, and great numbers of fish apparently 10 inches or a foot in length are to be seen stemming the rapid current. At the sight of them my thoughts involuntarily turned to my many English fishermen friends, whose mouths would have watered could they have seen this well-stocked stream, with its shoals of fish ready to jump at any and every fly.

As I had left for the interior without food-stuff, I had to manage during this period to live on what the country could offer us. There was no wealthy village near by, and there was very little big game to be got. It did exist, but it never gave us the chance of killing it. But then, there was the river! I was rather disappointed in waterfowl, as, the waters being high, all the sandbanks, their usual haunts, were flooded. So, apart from a few miserable pigeons, all my hope lay in fish. The waters of this river swarm with excellent fish, and the only question was how to get them. I had once seen a man get a fish in the following way: he threw some putrid meat as bait into the shallow water and waited with his gun.

In a desperate situation like mine I wanted to give this new sport of fish-shooting a fair trial; but

AN AMATEUR SPORTSMAN

my first difficulty was to find a bait. We had no meat, putrid or other ; so we tried palm cherries. No fish ever came near them, and this hope was shattered. Then I remembered that some friend of mine, a disciple of Izaak Walton, had induced me to take some hooks with me ; after a long search we found quite a packet full of different sizes. I at once chose the biggest : what good, thought I, was it to waste one's time over small fish when, by using a bigger hook, one could catch big ones ? My hook, I must say, looked rather like a miniature anchor, and I was sure that no fish of small size would be caught by it. I weighted my line with a huge piece of lead, and then tried to throw it far out in the river. I am sure it would have gone a good distance had not the hook caught in the ear of an interested looker-on ; but not much harm was done, as it at once tore through the lobe. I pacified the native to whom the accident had happened with a small present, but he stoutly refused to sell me his whole ear as a bait. At my next attempt I landed the hook in a tree, and at the next it tore my sleeve open. I was going to give it up and tell my companion that " it was useless, as the fish would not rise to-day " (a term I have heard used by anglers, but which, I am told, is not correct when ground-lines are used), when my cook, with a benevolent smile, offered to throw the line. Having duly cursed his impudence, I accepted his offer ; but did not allow him to throw the line before placing myself at a safe distance. He then informed me that I had forgotten to bait the hook, and having obtained from a friend some native

TAKEN UNAWARES

dough and used it for that purpose, out went his line, about 100 feet (as far as I could judge) from the bank. Now I came back and took hold of the line, for if anything was caught I did not wish to lose the credit of it. Well, I waited, and waited, and waited. Nothing came. I pulled the line in to see if the bait was still there. It was there, although slightly damaged. After renewing it my cook threw it out again. After some waiting I had a pull; I quickly hauled in the line, but soon I could pull no more; there was a dead weight against me. I thought I must have caught at least a whale. My cook took the line for a moment into his hand, and then said, with a smile: "You have caught nothing alive; your hook has caught in a tree floating down the river." So it was, and it took him nearly half an hour to disentangle it. After this I wanted to give up fishing; but, ashamed of returning empty-handed, I had the line thrown out again. The bank was sandy and had a gentle slope; so I tied the line firmly to my leg, lay down on my back, and was soon dreaming of far-away lands. I do not know how long I dozed in this way, but I was suddenly awakened by a terrific jerk on my leg. If that was not a bite, then there never was one. I tried to sit up, but this seemed quite an impossible thing; and then I was suddenly aware that I was being towed down, slowly but steadily, towards the water. With a violent effort I turned round to see if I could not catch hold of something, but the bank was absolutely bare. On and on I went, pulled by my leg, until I felt the water penetrating into my

A FINE HAUL

boots. Then I shrieked for help. This woke my cook, but before he could get near me I was in the water up to my knees. He caught hold of my arms, but could not impede my progress towards a wet grave. I did not think of the ignominy of the situation; my whole mind was concentrated on my wish to live. I still kept on getting deeper and deeper into the water, when suddenly an idea came to me, which, had I been in cool blood, ought to have occurred to me at once: "Cut the line!" I screamed. Well, he did cut it; but how shall I describe to you the agonies I felt when, after searching one of his pockets, he withdrew his hand empty, then he tried the other with no better result; meanwhile my shoulders were disappearing under water. When the line was cut I got out of the water and sat down silently, quite stupefied. My cook gazed vaguely into the water, when, with a sudden shout of triumph, he dived into it. "I have got him!" he shouted, swimming vigorously towards a floating tree. The fish had entangled the line in its branches, and we could clearly see how he had pulled and dragged on it, with little effect: the giant of the forest was a match for the giant of the waters. The cook sat triumphantly on the tree, waiting for events to come. When the tree stuck in the sand I thought the line could never resist the strain; but it did, and two hours later our united efforts resulted in our landing the fish. I shall not give you his weight, for two reasons: first, I had nothing to weigh him with; secondly, because you would not believe me.

BAYAKA FETISHES

The fish, fried in palm-oil, made an excellent dinner.

Zange is situated about 200 yards from the Lukula River, here a foaming torrent, 60 feet broad. Its shores are absolutely flat, bordered by grass instead of trees or bush. The left bank of the river is particularly fertile, and to this may be due a greater density of population than I found anywhere since leaving Kolokoto. Most of the plantations of the villages upon the right bank are situated on the other side of the river.

Zange is more than a village; it is a conglomeration of hamlets, in which every man seems to call himself a chief. Anyone who has two wives or a slave calls himself a chief; a man who is living with two or three children calls himself a chief. But the fact is that they are free men with Murikongo as their direct over-lord, and the assumption of the title is due less to a love for it than to a desire to receive presents from chance Europeans.

Zange is the proud possessor of two Bayaka fetishes of very great importance—Kikunga and Hembra—who inhabit a single hut. The villagers boasted of their treasure, but when I expressed a desire to inspect it they said that it was too dangerous for a foreigner to do so; even their own boys before the age of manhood and all women are not permitted to see them, for they would die of fear, so terrible are these images. Of course this excited my curiosity, and at last two men called Tata Chula and Tata Chafu promised to intercede

BAYAKA FETISHES

with the fetishman in my favour. After interviewing him they announced that he was prepared to show me the images, but that I must make an adequate present to the fetishes to avert their wrath. The present which I thereupon despatched seemed to meet the views of the custodian, for I was conducted to the hut. When I arrived there all women and children were sent away and the sanctum opened; it was a filthy hut. The larger image was a mask about 3 feet 6 inches high, with very prominent nose, jaw, and cheek-bones; the other fetish, only about 1 foot 6 inches high, was an ordinary mask. While I was in the hut I began to feel a curious creeping sensation all over me, and when I discovered the cause I hastily retired and shouted to Meyey to prepare a bath. The Bayaka chuckled loudly at my fate, and put it down to my visiting the image without being a Bayaka; how they themselves fared I do not know, probably they were already so well provided that a visit to the hut made no appreciable difference.

In my haste I forgot that I had no tub with me, so I had no resource but to bathe several times in the river, and remove my uninvited visitors with abundance of soap and cold water.

The next morning, after receiving the chiefs of some of the neighbouring villages, I set out to visit the Luye River, five hours' journey to the west, and hit upon it just at the beautiful falls; but as I traversed this portion of the country only on this occasion my recollections are rather vague, and I

RETURN TO MOSONGE

abstain from any detailed description. Game was fairly abundant, and small hillocks were frequent.

I returned *via* Kange to Yee, and then made my way to Mokunji, a Bambala village east of the latter place, situated in a forest of goyave trees. It is remarkable for the great number of good-looking girls to be found there, and its chief, Baka, enjoys the reputation of being one of the greatest lawyers of the country. From there I turned northwards along the valley of the Putumbo, the banks of which was dazzlingly white sand, and made my way to Putumbumba, famous for its basket-work, which is traded to all parts of the country, and hence to Mosonge. Kalala came to meet me, dressed in a suit of my clothes and with my best hat on his head. He was rather indignant when I reproached him with this breach of trust; he replied that he had done it to please me, because he knew how delighted I should be to see him looking so smart. He also gave me an account of the extraordinary zeal he had displayed in defending my property against the intended attacks of neighbouring tribes. But when I met the chief I learned from him that he too was very glad to see me back, because he had not had any sleep while I was away on account of the necessity of mounting guard over my goods, Kalala being always away in neighbouring villages, running after the girls. Kalala attributed the chief's action to jealousy, and added that it really did not matter either way, as he (Kalala) had married and settled down now, and went on to

EXPLORING THE INTERIOR

present me to his wife, a young lady of about nine years of age, only moderately good-looking, but still well enough, *faute de mieux*.

I paid the wages of my three boys on the day of my return, and shortly afterwards Mrs. Kalala came to complain that Kalala had given her only half the regulation allowance for a husband to give to a wife. I remonstrated with Kalala on the subject, but he calmly replied, "Half-sized wife, half-sized allowance." The idyll did not last very long. While the honeymoon was still in progress Kalala quarrelled with his better half, got a sound thrashing from her, and was chucked out of her hut, which, indeed, my previous experience of him led me to expect as the result of his new matrimonial adventure.

A few days after my return I wanted to go south again, but I had to get some Bayaka carriers, and no Bambala would venture through the Basamba country, for they were at enmity with them, and did not care to risk their lives. Under these circumstances Kalala volunteered to go south and fetch the necessary men; I told him that he did not know the way, and would certainly be killed *en route*. But he said with the utmost nonchalance that he could ask his way, and would get there all right. I was unwilling to let him run the risk, but about half an hour later he had disappeared, and two days later he turned up again, having traversed the hostile country, taking with him sufficient food for his two days' journey, with thirty Bayaka from Yee.

In all I made six journeys to the Lukulu during

EXPLORING THE INTERIOR

my stay in the neighbourhood, and in November 1905 I decided to return to the Kwilu. But again the carrier difficulty had to be met. It was quite out of the question for Bayaka to go to Kolokoto, and to fetch men from the Kwilu it was necessary to send a messenger. Meyey and Kalala offered to carry out this task, and with some misgivings I allowed them to set out on their difficult journey. I was more than a little uneasy while they were away, but about a week later they duly returned with about thirty Kolokoto carriers. Kalala reported that he had huge sport in his village; it had been reported that he had died in Mokunji (as a matter of fact that I had cut his throat), and his mother, when she saw him, took him for a ghost; only when he began to eat did she admit that he was her own Kalala.

On the way back to Kolokoto I passed some Wangongo villages, whose inhabitants, with the Basamba and Basongo, have the honour of being the most ancient stock in the country.

At Kolokoto I learnt that Kikungulu had been at work again, and, as before mentioned, had poisoned his own sister. Without seeing this disgusting individual I continued my journey. At the distance of about an hour from Kongo I halted to give my men a rest, and Meyey volunteered to go on to Kongo to see about the camping arrangements. In about an hour and a half he came back breathless to tell me of some extraordinary sights.

In the first place the river was of enormous

EXPLORING THE INTERIOR

breadth, such as he had never seen before, fully a thousand feet across. And then he had seen upon it a house with something behind it, turning, turning, turning, and it moved without any one to propel it; finally it was spitting fire from a big thing standing out in the middle. Upon hearing this report Kalala, who, no more than Meyey, had ever seen such a big river nor yet a steamer, undertook to explain things to Meyey. The solution which he gave after inspection of the steamer was that the steersman by turning the wheel caused the vessel to move, and that the big fire was simply to cook the food of the crew, but I don't think Meyey was convinced.

CHAPTER X

A false alarm—Braggadocio and the result—Settling in Luano—A mission of peace—Strategy—A successful ruse—A grand palaver—Boma to the rescue.

THE *Marie* was going up stream, so I had to wait several days for her to take me to Luano. The evening before the arrival of the steamer the Europeans residing in Kongo received the following message brought by a breathless and perspiring runner from Madibi: "Help! Help! The country has risen; some of my men have been killed, and I expect to be attacked every moment. I fear you will come too late; good-bye, perhaps for ever." The missive was addressed to the Resident of Kongo, and he showed it to me. He was anxious to start, but I pointed out that we should save time by waiting for the steamer; and that further, so far as my knowledge of the country went, the news was absolutely incredible. He was not convinced, however, and the excitement of the news brought on a bad attack of fever. On the following day I convinced him that my presence in Madibi would be amply sufficient for the occasion. I, therefore, boarded the steamer, and we found ourselves at our destination at about four in the afternoon. Profound peace prevailed; there were absolutely no signs of the expected attack. What had actually happened was this: Mr. X., a

A FALSE ALARM

resident in Madibi, was unable to keep his people under proper control. Five of them had set out on a marauding expedition into the interior, the so-called Banyangi country, appropriating goats and fowls *ad lib.* The Bayanzi are a peaceful people, but this tried their patience too far, especially as the women drove them on to take revenge by suggesting that, if they did not retaliate, the invaders, five strong, would carry off, not only goats and fowls, but also women, the wives of the male inhabitants, and that they would follow them without reluctance, glad to leave such cowards who did not really deserve to possess wives, if they could not deal with this handful of men. Roused by these insults the men set upon the marauders and killed four of them, while the fifth escaped to tell the news in Madibi. Mr. X. was in mortal terror, and summoned assistance in hot haste. It is satisfactory to add that he was brought before the magistrate, who held him responsible for the occurrences, and sentenced him to six months' imprisonment.

The circumstances, however, only came out much later. The account which I got from Mr. X. was that five of his men had been attacked; that he had sallied out to their aid, and, after many lion-hearted deeds, had only succeeded in rescuing one. Now Mr. X. did not understand that it is very dangerous to exaggerate in Congoland, as the following true story will make clear.

Some years ago an official, having completed his term of service, was on his way down the river, and

BRAGGADOCIO AND THE RESULT

expected to reach Europe in a few weeks. One evening he was having a drink at Matadi in company with some greenhorns, whom he resolved to impress with his marvellous exploits. Accordingly, he began to tell of his encounters with the natives, and the more beer he drank the more blood-curdling did his adventures become; naturally the natives came off badly in these adventures, and he did not display any particular respect for their rights in his supposed dealings with them. As ill-luck would have it, a high Government official was also taking a quiet glass of beer in the same house and overheard the conversation, with the result that our fire-eater was arrested by a police-officer the next morning, and charged with numerous offences against the blacks, the indictment being simply a reproduction of the stories he had told on the previous evening. He protested his innocence, saying that it was all braggadocio, merely meant to impress the greenhorns; but all to no purpose. He was told that some inquiry must certainly be made.

Now the post at which he had been stationed could be reached without difficulty in some three months from Matadi; he remained, therefore, for six months cooling his heels there, and for as much longer as the magistrate of his old district required to investigate the truth of the stories which the bold adventurer had told against himself. They all proved to be inventions, and he was allowed to go home after a delay of about seven or eight months.

To come back to Madibi; I slept the night there, and, of course, there was not the shadow of an attack



Bayanzi women have to a great extent adopted Northern Bambala fashion; there are, however, still some who adhere to older customs. Thus some ladies still shave the summit of the head and let the hair grow only on the back of it, arranging it there into cords with soot and palm oil.

SETTLING IN LUANO

upon us ; so, when I took my leave the next day to go to Luano, I told Mr. X. that he had muddled things badly, and would have to pay the penalty, which, in fact, proved to be the case.

About nine in the morning we arrived in Luano, which was to be my abode for several months. The settlement is beautifully situated ; the shore rises about 15 feet, and on the top of the bank is a clearing of some 300 yards square, whereon are buildings and plantations of coffee and mango trees against a background of dark forest. On the right and left of the clearing are houses for the use of visitors, and store-houses for goods. In the middle, fronting the river, is the house which was to shelter me, a palace comprising three rooms, each 12 to 15 feet square. About 100 yards behind the settlement is a small native village, also called Luano, the inhabitants of which are Bayanzi.

The settlement of Luano is about ten years old. It would be exceedingly prosperous but for the great difficulty of obtaining labour. The population is exceptionally dense, but up to the present they have never shown any disposition to sell their labour to the white man, and all workmen have had to be imported from the Kasai.

My first care was to issue a notice that anyone who was ill, and wished to be cured, had only to call and he would receive treatment. Numerous patients came, and they fell into three classes : the first and smallest asked how much they would have to pay for the cure ; the second said that it was out of the

MEDICAL ADVICE

question for them to pay anything even if they were set on their legs again ; while the third inquired what I was prepared to pay for the privilege of curing them. I did not gratify them by producing a scale of fees.

My pharmacopœia was not very extensive ; Meyey assisted me in dispensing and diagnosing, and when a native came to see me he would inquire what was the matter. The ordinary reply was to touch first the head and then the stomach, and he promptly ordered Epsom Salts ; and, in fact, most of the ailments were due to indigestion.

My efforts on their behalf gained me the goodwill of the natives, and soon they began to come and see me to have a quiet chat, and not merely when they wished for medical advice. It was in the course of these visits that I heard what had really happened in Madibi. A great subject of conversation was the month-long war then raging between the Bayanzi on one side and the Bambala and Wangongo on the other. This seemed to be a serious matter for the country, and I resolved to intervene at the earliest possible moment. I was confirmed in this resolution by a conversation with Boma, chief of Luzubi, and leader of one of the contending parties, who said that if I would arbitrate he was quite prepared to submit to my judgment. Of course, as he explained matters, the Bayanzi were entirely in the wrong, but I told him that it was out of the question for me to judge without hearing the other party. He quite agreed with me, and urged me to penetrate to the



FRAMEWORK OF A HOUSE

When a house is to be built, a framework is first erected, and this is then covered with grass. It is a curious fact that village fires are a rare occurrence, as the people keep a fire going all night, and no special precautions are taken to avoid conflagrations.



WEIRD VILLAGE CHARMS

The village charms are of the weirdest description. A heap of stones surrounded by canework, a few skulls of animals slain, the shell of a landrail dyed red, and such-like things have great magical powers attributed to them.

A MISSION OF PEACE

Bayanzi country and persuade them to choose me as arbitrator.

After getting fairly settled in Luano I collected carriers and set out on my mission of peace. My first care was to visit the district of Luzubi and get the assent of Boma's own people, for I knew that even a great chief was dependent on his men. I summoned a great *milonga*, to which all warriors were called, and two days elapsed before all had come together. As I speak Kimbala fluently I had not much difficulty in bending them to my views. I addressed them very differently from the way in which I should have addressed a European audience. It is no use appealing directly to their reason with arguments based on the relative advantages of the various courses: the native mind is accustomed to allegories, and to argue successfully with a native audience it is necessary to draw one's illustrations from their daily life.

On leaving Luzubi we proceeded south-east, and after about an hour's march reached an open space, bordered by two rivers, on which the fights usually took place. Progress was slow after crossing the second river, for the land being in a state of war, all preparations had been made to receive an enemy. The grass was 6 feet high and, on either side of the path, only a foot broad, were sharp stakes, pointing in the direction from which we were coming, which would infallibly impale the incautious traveller who wandered from the straight road. In the centre of the path were carefully masked man-traps, holes 3 feet deep by a foot broad and 2 feet long, too

A MISSION OF PEACE

small to permit the victim to fall completely into them, but containing five pointed stakes which seldom fail to pierce his feet. My feet being protected by boots, I led the way, trying at each step whether the ground was solid. Near the village of Gangan was a specially elaborate device: in the centre of the path was an ordinary man-trap, the covering of grass and sand removed as if by accident, but the unwary traveller who took warning at this and stepped aside was plunged into one or other of two much larger pitfalls in the bush on either side. Farther on a little hillock, with three arrows stuck in it and pointing in the direction of the village, formed a plain indication to the natives and those who understood their language that entrance was forbidden.

When we approached the village we found that all grass and bush had been burned down in a circuit of several hundred yards, so as to give from the higher ground on which the village stood a clear view of any attempted attack. Of course our approach had been signalled some time before we emerged on the open space, and as soon as we stepped into it some hundreds of warriors rushed out of the village, their bows at the ready, pulling and relaxing their bow-strings alternately, as if they were intending every moment to let fly their arrows.

My carriers to a man threw their loads away and decamped. I was left alone with Meyey and Bokale, and the former rushed up with my rifle, but I told him to put it down, bring my hammock-chair, and prepare for camping. I sat down, lit a cigarette, and

STRATEGY

took no notice of the threatening Bayanzi warriors, who seemed to be quite bewildered by my behaviour. One man advanced and shouted out to know who I was and what I wanted. I replied that I was a European, by name Deke (*i.e.* a bird), a name which I had got from the Swahili-speaking people, among whom I had collected many bird skins. I said I had business with the chief, and when they asked if I did not know they were at war I replied that I did, but failed to see what concern it was of mine; I was not at war with them.

The next question was whether I had any soldiers with me; but I said I had none, and pointed out that even my own rifle was lying on the ground some distance away from me. Thereupon he proposed to go and ask the chief what was to be done and I agreed. Returning in a very short time, from which I judged that the chief was in hiding not far off, he asked if I was prepared to go to the village accompanied by my two boys only. I said that I did not propose to do anything else, and the messenger was so far satisfied that he came up, apologised for the suspicions with which I had been received, which he excused by their fear of their enemies' stratagems, and led me to the village.

Here I met Chitutu, an important chief of this district, who also had a reputation as one of the greatest workers of magic in the country. The village is composed of about seventy huts; but it must be borne in mind that it is inhabited exclusively by Chitutu, his family, and his slaves. His subjects

STRATEGY

are all in neighbouring villages. We exchanged presents, and I added a small extra gift to be presented to his fetishes ; this greatly delighted and astonished him, coming from a European. We carried on a conversation for some time, his prime minister Moama acting as interpreter, and Bokale, who spoke Bayanzi well, checked his interpretation on my behalf.

I explained the reason of my coming, and Chitutu seemed quite disposed to arrange matters with the Bambala, but he was greatly incensed against the Wangongo, who had, he said, simply joined in the war for the sake of the spoil which would fall to their share, and had, in addition, shown themselves to be very treacherous. He said he had the greatest respect for Boma, who was and is his friend, but he really could not understand how such a great man could lower himself by associating with the Wangongo. His Bambala prisoners from the village of Luzubi he had simply kept interned in his village, but if ever a Wangongo fell into his hands he would promptly be cut up and eaten.

He was, however, disposed to summon a *milonga*, although, as he said, his people were some of them far away, as they extended as far as the Kancha, twenty miles as the crow flies and forty by the native paths, that is to say, ten or twelve hours' march distance. Then he retired, and a few minutes later I saw the messengers going off in all directions. The villagers' confidence was not yet completely won, and I saw women and children peeping from behind houses, so I had recourse to a sovereign remedy in

A SUCCESSFUL RUSE

such cases—curiosity. Sitting down I took out an old number of the *Graphic* and began to inspect the pictures with much deliberation. Holding it so that they were visible to others too, I noticed that the crowd gradually crept nearer and nearer, till at last they began to make audible comments upon what they saw.

Singularly enough, they did not seem to take in the picture as a whole, but recognised first a face, then a hat, then a stick, till at last they exclaimed: "Why, it's a man." Undoubtedly the great success of the exhibition was the advertisement of Monkey Brand Soap; the monkey was instantly recognised, and when we went on to other pictures they continually begged me to turn back to that funny monkey, upon all the features of which they commented with the utmost appreciation.

I must not, however, allow my readers to suppose that this use of illustrated papers was due to my own ingenuity. Years before that great traveller and administrator, Sir H. H. Johnson, had pointed out to me how useful it was for the traveller among uncivilised nations to have a stock of such pictures by him.

Moama pointed out to me among the crowd a particularly beautiful girl, who, he said, was his wife; I asked her name, but he refused to tell me. It appeared that no one but the brother or the husband of a married woman is permitted to use her name; she must always be called the wife of So-and-so, and any breach of this rule on the part of an unauthorised

A GRAND PALAVER

person justifies the husband in taking the law into his own hands and killing the offender. When I asked whether he would do so if a European were the culprit, he laughed and said, "Oh no, you see Europeans have no manners."

By the next day many hundreds of warriors had arrived, though not nearly all were present who acknowledged Chitutu as their chief. The palaver lasted two whole days and my patience was sorely tried. The leader of the opposition was a Monguli chief, who pointed out that the Bayanzi had always shown too much generosity to their foes; on this occasion at any rate they ought to fight it out, he said. The sun was already approaching the horizon for the second time and no progress had been made, thanks to the vigorous speeches of this orator. Losing my patience, I addressed them in the following terms: "Do not listen to this bad man. He thinks only of the Bambala and Wangongo warriors whom you will slay; he does not remind you of the Bayanzi men who will meet their death; nor does he call up before your minds the picture of the unhappy Bayanzi women harassed in their plantations and perhaps carried off by your foes." After this the chief said no more and the palaver was soon brought to a satisfactory conclusion. When all was over he came up to me and said, "*Deke*, you have called me a bad man, because I expressed my opinions with which you did not agree. I only said what I thought right. If you did not want to hear the views of people with whom you do not agree why did you call a palaver?" I am

BOMA TO THE RESCUE

compelled to admit that he was right, and I felt more than a little ashamed of myself, but there was no enmity between us on the score of my remarks, and we became very good friends later on.

The palaver was hardly over when the Wanguli warriors arrived who had been summoned to it, but failed to arrive in time. Chitutu resolved to impress me with his greatness, and commanded them to defile before me. They were in full war dress, their loins encircled by the *Kimpusu*, their faces painted red, and their bows and curious broad-bladed short knives in their hands. I had the sun behind my back, and its rays lit up the painted faces till they glowed still more ruddily. They surged past me in a solid mass, ten or twelve men in each rank and a hundred and fifty deep, waving their bows and brandishing their knives to the accompaniment of frantic yells and war-songs. It was a sea of black humanity, and I do not think I ever saw a more magnificent sight in my life.

I stayed one more day in Gangan and then set out for Luano, but as usual carriers were a difficulty. The Bayanzi were ready to take my goods as far as the first of the two rivers, and there, they said, it was the business of the Bambala to take up the loads. The Bambala, on the other hand, were by no means prepared to cross the field of so many well-fought frays, and declined to pass the river which was the boundary on their side. I was thus in danger of being stranded when Boma, with magnificent courage, came to my rescue. Advancing boldly across the battle-field, he grasped each Bayanzi by the hand and

BOMA TO THE RESCUE

shook it. The peace had been agreed upon, but each of the contending parties had so far mistrusted the other. This action on the part of Boma set the seal upon the treaty, and as long as I remained in the country there was no outbreak of hostilities between the old enemies.

CHAPTER XI

The Bahuana tribe—Tribal rites and customs—Methods of Warfare—Original theories—Head-dress—Characteristics—Establishing villages—A revolting ceremony.

THE inhabitants of the region of Luano are, apart from the Bambala, chiefly Bahuana and Bayanzi.

The Bahuana territory lies on the right bank of the Kwilu from near Kitwit to beyond Luano. Bahuana communities are also found on the left bank near the mouth of the Inzia, at Kongo and elsewhere. They claim descent from the Bateke, most of whom are in French territory, but so far there is no evidence beyond tribal tradition.

They are a well-built people, rather short however ; it cannot be said that they equal the Bakongo in powers of endurance, but they are able to do without food for forty-eight hours at a time. So far from being coal-black, as the average man pictures the inhabitant of Africa, their skin may be called reddish brown to chocolate ; their eyes are of course dark, and there is a curious greenish tinge in them, while the "white" of the eye is strongly tinged with yellow. Their hair, too, differs markedly in some cases from that of the typical Kongo black ; it is, as a rule, woolly and, of course, black, but sometimes individuals are

THE BAHUANA TRIBE

found who have dark brown curly hair, very fine in texture, and far rounder in section than typical African hair.

The clothing of the Bahuana is simple and, unlike many African tribes, their ornaments are few; both sexes wear a cloth made of palm-leaf fibre round the loins, and important men wear a second cloth over the first; but there are no patterns on the cloth, though they import from the Bayanzi a similar article with inwoven diaper patterns. Women sometimes ornament the straw-coloured *kipussu* cloth with a few beads and a number of small receptacles made from necks of gourds.

Women dress their hair in a chignon or ringlets at the back of the head, and paint it with red clay; the front of the head is shaved and blackened with soot; when they cut their hair they wear a piece of cloth as a head covering till the hair has grown again; but, as a rule, no head-dress is worn. Eyebrows are shaved, eyelashes are pulled out. The men remove the beard and moustache when they are young; older men grow a scanty beard, but the majority shave the moustache.

Apart from scars and body-painting the only ornaments are iron bracelets, combs, and a hair of an elephant's tail round a man's neck. The few scars worn occasionally by men are round the navel; but the women usually incise the arms, shoulders, and stomach, and produce big lumps of flesh. The operation is performed at the age of about four or five by the mother or some skilled operator. The pigments

TRIBAL RITES AND CUSTOMS

used for body-painting are red clay and soot ; these are mixed with palm-oil.

The food of the Bahuana does not differ from that of the Bambala, and it is unnecessary to repeat what has been said in an earlier chapter. It may, however, be mentioned that the women eat frogs, whence the tribe is termed *koto* (froggies) by the Bambala ; the men, however, must abstain from frogs under penalty of sickness.

Cannibalism is general in spite of the abundance of animal food, but it is practised by men only. The larder is replenished by expeditions organised with this special purpose ; the bodies are cooked in the ordinary way, but the skull is soaked in water till the flesh falls away, and it is then reserved as a trophy in a special hut.

Before a hunting expedition the hunting medicine—a little charcoal kept in a bag—is sprinkled with palm-wine, and if the expedition is successful, grass dipped in the blood of the game is presented to it. The drives are organised by the chief and directed by some experienced sportsman ; the entire male population takes part, and the method is to fire the grass. The man who inflicts the first wound receives the head of the animal, and, if it is an elephant, the ivory goes with the head, but half is due to the chief ; this is, of course, with the exception of those parts of the country where the head is paid as tribute to the Bayanzi chief.

Agriculture is, as usual, the business of the women, but in this tribe the plantations are communal pro-

TRIBAL RITES AND CUSTOMS

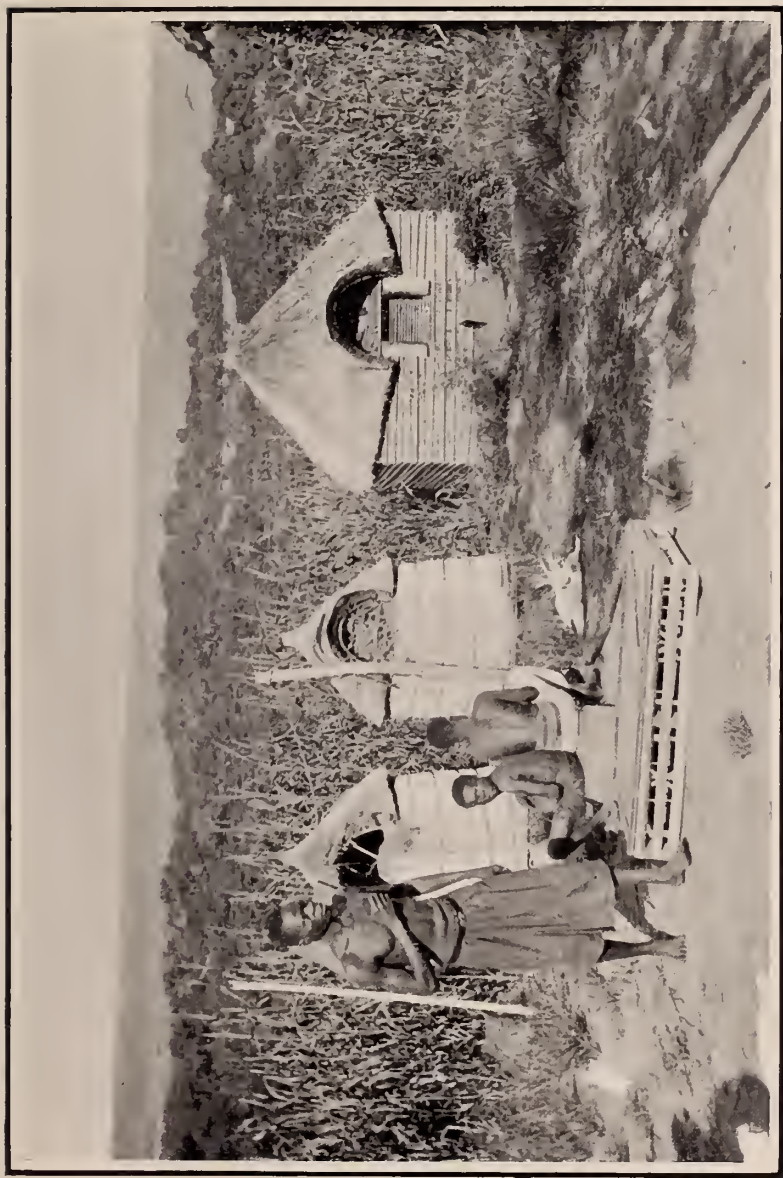
perty; individual gardens, except for tobacco, are unknown; when anyone wants cassava or some other product, he simply takes it from the common stock. In Europe there would probably be some idlers, if the cultivators knew that shirking would not affect, to any great extent, the quantity available for their personal use; but this is not the way with the blacks.

There are two kinds of huts, one like that of the Bambala, the other like that of the Bayanzi, built of straw and palm-leaves on a rectangular ground-plan, the transverse section forming a pointed arch. In front is a verandah, and the interior is divided into two compartments. The villages are built some distance from the river bank and are rather straggling; the huts of the wives of each family are built in an irregular quadrangle communicating with the next group by a narrow path.

Assemblies are held in the middle of the village among the Bahuana proper, under a roof supported on four poles; among the Bahoni, south of the Luzubi, they are held beneath a kola tree.

Bahuana arts and crafts are much the same as those of the Bambala, but their iron-work is far superior; the northern part of the tribe imports iron from the south, and they produce knives, hoes, axes, arrow-heads, bracelets, &c.

Property can be held by any adult free person, but slaves can own nothing, and consequently cannot redeem them themselves. The debtor cannot be seized as bondsman, but his children, or a wife who has borne him a child, may be taken.



PICTURESQUE HOUSES

On the left bank of the Kwiu the natives are of an exceptionally picturesque appearance. The doors are covered with porches made of thatch, which seem to be resting on two wooden pillars; these are, however, purely ornamental. The low-houses are smaller in size and round, otherwise they are imitations of the human habitation.

TRIBAL RITES AND CUSTOMS

If a man dies without heirs his goods do not pass to a slave, as among the Bayaka ; they are burnt, but the slaves receive their freedom.

When the Bahuana first reached the Kwilu they were under one supreme chief, but his authority has now fallen into disuse, owing to the extent of the territory over which the tribe extends, and in some parts only the village chiefs are recognised. Their position is not an easy one, for all free adult males of the village form their council, which must be consulted in all matters of importance ; in theory he is free to act, but in practice the majority of the council has the deciding voice. The office of chief is hereditary, and the son of the eldest sister is his heir ; the maternal uncle acts as guardian to a minor. The principal function of the chief is to administer justice, and his sole income is derived from the fines inflicted in this capacity. North of Chimbane, where the great chief is recognised, a nominal tribute is levied, consisting of a few goats or fowls from each village ; he has the decision of matters relating to peace or war.

A Bahuana son-in-law may not enter the house of his parents-in-law, and if he meets them on the road he must turn aside so as to avoid them. A daughter-in-law, on the other hand, may visit her parents-in-law, and is required to show them great respect ; but she must avoid her husband's maternal uncle.

When they go to war the men above ten years of age are summoned by the war drum. The chief is the leader, but there is a council composed of chiefs and elders ; the young men may attend, but must

METHODS OF WARFARE

keep silence. Sometimes an ambassador is needed, and the chief acts in this capacity, his person being respected by the enemy.

A war party marches in single file, the younger and less valorous in front. A fight is usually begun by exchanging insults, but the conflicts are limited to the open and villages are not attacked. Ambushes are, however, employed, and the foe may be invited to settle matters by arrangement and then treacherously attacked. No male prisoners are made, anyone falling into the hands of his foes being at once killed and eaten; but women are kept in captivity till the end of the war.

A dead man is buried with his face to the west in a sitting position, and with him his clothes and weapons with some food and palm-wine; if he was a maker of palm-wine, his implements are buried with him. Women are buried in the same manner, but their pots are buried with them, whereas in the case of a man they are broken on the grave. A man killed by lightning is buried full length on his back. Men in mourning paint the forehead black, women the whole face.

There are two non-corporeal parts of a man, the *bun* and the *doshi*; all creatures have the latter; it leaves the body in dreams, and after death hangs about in the air, visits its friends, haunts its enemies, and so on; animals and fetishes have *doshi* but no *bun*.

The *bun* disappears at death, but it is said to enter the body of a large animal if its owner has had

ORIGINAL THEORIES

many fetishes; a man without fetishes can cause his *bun* to appear to his friends in the form of a vaporous body. If a man is killed by lightning his *bun* is destroyed, but suicide does not affect the continued existence of the *bun* and the *doshi*.

I did not hear any Bahuana stories, but some of their mythical ideas are curious. They say that lightning is a cat which lives in the clouds and comes to earth when it is hungry to eat a tree or a man. By the side of this their explanation of the rainbow as a big snake is commonplace; they say it feeds on fish and shows itself sometimes when it has had enough to eat.

The Bayanzi inhabit the northern part of the Kwilu, and there are many signs that they originated from the north, where they inhabit the shores of the Congo, from the Stanley Pool to the Ubangi. There are statements in the works of many writers that they have come down the Ubangi on trading expeditions, that their real name was Babangi, and that Bayanzi was only an insulting name given to them by the people they visited. These are statements which have often been repeated, but it is impossible to find on what they have been based; at any rate, in the Kwilu there can be no doubt that they do not consider it a nickname and never call themselves by any other. There are no traditions concerning their arrival in the country. It may be conjectured that they have taken peaceful possession of tracts of land, sparsely populated; at any rate they have long been in possession of it, for the northern section of the Bambala have found them

HEAD-DRESS

in the country and purchased land from them, and even now there are many signs that they consider the Bambala as their suzerains. Physically the people must be divided into two sections, the people on the river banks who are ugly and poor in appearance, while those of the up-country are fine, strong, and healthy.

The hair of the men is dressed in a bunch at the back of the head, that of the women is usually parted in the middle, and made up into two plaits which hang down behind the ears. This latter hair dress is found among their tribesmen on the Congo too. Head coverings are not worn, but when in mourning the Bayanzi ornament their heads with bunches of grass in the form of wreaths. On the river bank, where the people are exceedingly dirty, no paint is used, but in the hinterland they ornament themselves on festive occasions with red pigment. No scars are found on the men, but women are decorated in this fashion on the abdomen. Clothing consists for both sexes of palm clothes worn round the loins; plain on the river banks, ornamented with diaper pattern in the interior. As ornaments, bracelets of iron and copper are worn on arms and legs and attached to their girdles; women wear a small number of necks of gourds.

A peculiarity of the Bayanzi, especially those of the river bank, is that they are not cleanly in the preparation of their food, to such an extent that my followers of the neighbouring tribe frequently refused food offered to them by this people, although they were starving. They are not only uncleanly in the



A DRUM

The drum is the principal instrument played at dances; if the sounds produced by it cannot be called harmonious, they are certainly loud and rhythmic. The drummer is a man of some importance and he makes quite a nice income out of the presents he receives for his performances.



A WOODEN GONG

The wooden gongs of the Bapinji are made out of the solid; they are rather out of place in this region, as this form has been associated in the mind of anthropologists with Central and East Africa. The gong is a highly developed means of signalling at considerable distances, and certain tribes are past masters in transmitting even the most complicated messages.

CHARACTERISTICS

way they prepare their food, but they eat anything, no matter how dirty. I saw in the village an elephant which had been shot months before, and the people were still banqueting off it. The Bayanzi are great cannibals, but do not eat the flesh of people who have died a natural death. I had on several occasions to investigate a case of murder, and I found on inquiry that the murdered people had been eaten, and that every male in the village had shared in the feast on the remains, the children being given the bones to gnaw. They are not ashamed of cannibalism, and openly admit that they practise it because of their liking for human flesh.

The tobacco grown by the Bayanzi near Luano is famous throughout the country. It is chiefly used for smoking, though snuffing is also practised.

The Bayanzi are fishermen on the river, hunters in the interior. The women throughout the country are great agriculturists. Smelting and the working of iron are not unknown to them; the Wanguli, one of the sub-tribes, are good smiths, and their weapons, tools, &c. are particularly well made. Trading is one of the great occupations of the men, especially exporting food, tobacco, ivory, and rubber.

The Bayanzi are governed by a number of great chiefs, who, again, are represented by petty chiefs in the different villages; these latter do not pay tribute to the former, who exist only for the purpose of war. New villages are established whenever a free man has saved enough money and settles down as a petty chief on his own ground. But he still regards the chief of

ESTABLISHING VILLAGES

the village he left as his suzerain. As above mentioned, the great Bayanzi chiefs exact tribute from foreign tribes who have settled in their country. This tribute consists in the heads of all game slain and all people killed in war. In many villages of the Bayanzi chiefs small huts are found which contain all the human skulls the chief has received ; the more skulls he has the greater chief he is considered.

The great chief usually has a confidential adviser, who, in all cases observed, was a slave ; such slaves have great influence, and, to assure their fidelity, receive from their masters many presents. Of course they are nevertheless open to bribery. They often impersonate the chief before strangers, while the master keeps in the background. The chief, as a rule, is the head fetish man.

The population is composed of the great chiefs, the petty chiefs, freemen, and slaves. The nobility found amongst the Bambala does not exist. The slaves are mainly Bayanzi, and their status is hereditary.

Polygamy is the rule ; in the case of adultery the wronged husband may legally kill his wife, but as a rule he accepts heavy compensation. Blood revenge is known. If an inhabitant of a village is killed all his fellows rise at once and attack the village of the murderer. Hostilities do not cease until a slave belonging to the latter village is handed over to be eaten.

Amongst the Bayanzi on the river bank, especially in the neighbourhood of Kongo, belief in *Moloki* as a cause of sickness, death, and misfortune is found, and

A REVOLTING CEREMONY

the witch is killed and eaten; there cannot be any doubt that the custom has been adopted from the Bambala, as tribes of the interior do not practise it. In Gangan I saw the chief make his invocations to his fetishes. The ceremony is as follows; All the fetishes are spread out on a piece of cloth; the chief, with two of his sons or slaves, sits down opposite them. A cock is brought, and the chief cuts an artery at the side of the bird's neck, and lets the blood trickle out through the mouth over the three first fetishes, scattering a few drops over the others. Then he chews kola, and meanwhile addresses the fetishes, alternately coaxing and threatening them, and making his petition, which is usually a request for fertility for his wives and slaves. After each sentence he spits on the three principal fetishes, and his sons or slaves spit on the others.

CHAPTER XII

A faithful friend—Diplomacy—From cook to chief—Hints to Europeans—Native humour—A hippo story—Metempsychosis—Negroid logic—Settling down—An expensive amusement—Domestic possessions—Game in Luano.

NOT content with giving me an imaginative account of the quarrel in which four of his men met their death, the X. mentioned above must needs send in to his manager an official report to the same effect. The latter transmitted the information to the Government, who sent a police-officer with instructions to carry out an investigation on the spot. When I got back to Luano this officer just passed on the *Marie*, accompanied by an escort of about twenty men. I only exchanged a few words with him, as the only reason for stopping at Luano was to take in wood; he told me, however, that he would call on his way back, as he had some matters at Luano, too, into which he had to inquire.

A few minutes after the steamer had started, Meyey and Kalala brought to me in triumph a fine fox-terrier, the property of the police-officer, which had been left behind. Kalala suggested that we need not return the animal, but I sternly vetoed the idea. In the evening I overheard a conversation between him and Meyey, in which he hinted that it would be very nice if the police-officer were killed, so that there

A FAITHFUL FRIEND

would be no need to hand over the dog. As I had occasion to do the lieutenant some service in his dealings with the natives some time later, he presented me with the dog, and told me that its name was Fox, which the natives promptly translated into Pokosso; it proved a faithful friend to me as long as I remained in Congoland. Of course every dog is to his owner, as every baby to its mother, a miracle of intelligence and all the virtues; but I will not weary my readers with over many stories in illustration of Fox's capacity. Suffice it to say that I taught him to point as well as any pointer, and managed to impress the natives with the greatest respect for him.

When I entered a village A. which was at war with another, which we will call B., I offered Fox a leg of chicken or other tit-bit with the left hand, telling him that it was a present to him from the chief of village B. He had been carefully trained, and would never accept anything so offered, promptly turning his back instead. Then I transferred the dainty to my right hand, and remarked that I had made a mistake; it was the chief of village A. who was giving him the present, whereupon he grabbed it out of my hand in a twinkling. The natives were of course all attention during this little comedy, and nothing would persuade them that Fox was not a transformed man.

Meyey got greatly attached to Fox, who was thenceforth included in the "we" of which I spoke above. If anyone asked him whom the "we" of a hunting anecdote designated, he replied, "Why, me

DIPLOMACY

and Fox and *Deke*." Kalala, too, made great friends with Fox, and his favourite amusement was to lure a native cur from a village by means of a bone, and when he had got him sufficiently near to Fox, throw the bone between them and enjoy the resulting fight, in which Fox, of course, proved the victor. But this little game proved far too expensive for me, for I was continually being called upon to pay damages; so I had to repress Kalala's sporting instincts, and the native dogs were left in peace. Once, and only once, Kalala lapsed from the path of virtue, and I put him on the shore as a punishment, telling him to count the numerous parrots which flew overhead. Instead he went to sleep, and when I asked him how many had passed, he replied, "Oh, lots."

When Lieutenant Danniels returned to Luano he informed me that, when approaching Banyangi country, where he had to examine witnesses, he had been attacked and several of his men wounded. He had, however, retired without attempting reprisals, for his orders were to do no more than interview the witnesses, whom of course he failed to see. When I heard this I offered to intervene, and assured him that if I asked the chiefs to meet him it was exceedingly improbable that they would refuse. He accepted my suggestion, and I duly carried out my promise; in consequence of his report, X. was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

The matter which brought Lieutenant Danniels to Luano was more complicated. The missionaries had

DIPLOMACY

complained that some people from a village near the mission had been killed by the inhabitants of Matani, a very important Bayanzi village. Here, too, I intervened with good results; Danniels proposed to visit the village in person, but I told him that if he did so he would certainly be attacked by the frightened inhabitants. Instead, I suggested that I should send a message to the chief telling him that the authorities were in Luano, and that instead of coming to the village they would await his coming, if he would bring in those who were responsible for the murder. Danniels fell in with the idea and I carried it out. In two days from the despatch of my message, the chief appeared bringing with him all the malefactors in chains, and handed them over to the authorities.

I acted as interpreter in the proceedings, and the accusers, confronted with the Bayanzi prisoners, were compelled to admit that they had been guilty of depredations, and tried to carry off women, goats, and other miscellaneous property. As a result the charge was naturally dismissed after a trial which lasted nearly a month, though the account is here compressed into a few lines. During this time I had the pleasure of the company of Lieutenant Danniels, and I need hardly say how much I enjoyed the society of a white man after having lived for nearly a year quite alone, so far as European society was concerned.

I took advantage of Danniels' presence to arrange a little palaver of my own. Half an hour from Luano was the village of Kika, the chief of which—Mole Mole—had died some twelve months before without

FROM COOK TO CHIEF

legal heir. No successor had been appointed, and from being a well-conducted place the village had become a den of thieves. Danniels summoned the warriors of the village and informed them that they must elect a new chief. They did so very reluctantly, being unwilling to have any check upon their evil doing. Eventually, probably out of compliment to me, they elected Bokale, my cook, who had been born in the village some fifteen years before. He had served another European before myself, and this and his great travels had made his reputation. He refused to take over the duties of his office as long as I remained in Luano, but was duly installed when I went south for the second time. On my return I heard that he was performing his duties to the general satisfaction of his subjects.

I had acquired a reputation among the natives not only by the cures which I had effected, but also because I studied their habits and was careful never to infringe any native custom. It was my practice to treat them as gentlemen, and they showed themselves worthy of the confidence which I reposed in them. Recent events had enormously increased my prestige; in the first place, I had put a stop to a war which had lasted for months, if not for years, and then I had acted as their spokesman with the authorities and secured fair treatment for them. The result of all this was that my word was law in this country; I had only to say a thing and it was done. Other Europeans had failed to obtain in Luano the labour which they required for their own



BAMBALA WOMAN AND CHILD

The Southern Bambala, women and men, have their teeth filed to points. When children are very small they are carried on their mother's back; as soon as they are strong enough to hang on by themselves they ride astride on the hip of their mother. They are weaned at a very late age.



A DUG-OUT

The dug-outs of the Upper Congo are of great length; they are easily steered by two men, one in front and one behind. Europeans usually travel by boats manned by forty or fifty men; I saw one dug-out which required a crew of eighty. It was broad enough to put a table into it and permit four chairs to be put round the table. The diameter of the tree of which it was made must have been about six feet.

HINTS TO EUROPEANS

purposes. I had no difficulty in getting the twenty men I required, and I was able to draft twenty times that number to other factories which needed them.

Perhaps I may here give a hint to anyone who may wish to follow in my footsteps. It is—never to strike a native. He will not hit back, and it is like striking a man whose hands are tied. The native knows that it is cowardly, and he knows that you know it. The European who uses his fists upon a man of colour does so to his own loss; he simply loses caste among the natives, even though he may gain his end for the moment. It is only when one lives with the native on these terms that one begins to appreciate him as he really is. Having won the confidence of the tribes among whom I was living, I began to get an insight into their character and to learn how great a sense of humour there is in the true-born native of the Congo.

Humour is an elusive thing, and in the process of translation from one language to another the fine aroma only too often disappears. It is one thing to recall a scene, with the personalities of the actors, their very words and the by-play which contributes so much to humour in any part of the world, but quite another to sit down and describe to those who have never been in Africa the inimitable subtleties of negro wit.

During my stay in Luano an officer of the Congo State paid me a visit with five and twenty soldiers. They were of different tribes, mainly Babangi and

NATIVE HUMOUR

Batetela, well-trained, fine-looking fellows, led by a kind and smart officer; he kept his men well in hand, and not once during their month's stay did they give the slightest cause for complaint. They fraternised with the natives, danced with them, learned their songs, and taught them those of their own country. The behaviour of soldiers is always dependent on the officer; and if an officer is unable to keep his people in hand he would do better to resign his commission, for he is unworthy of bearing it.

A special favourite of mine whom I have referred to earlier in these pages was a bugler, of Ubangi origin, named Bobo. I like to see a fine man, and Bobo was, and I hope still is, one of the most magnificent specimens of black humanity upon which I ever set eyes; tall, broad-shouldered, with a bright cheerful face, always happy, he was an excellent soldier, brave and immensely strong, with a temper as sweet as a child's. He could face death laughingly, but he could laugh too when the joke was against himself, as the sequel will show.

Bobo was eating his breakfast one morning in the course of an expedition in the Banyangi country, and was making an onslaught on a piece of boiled fowl, which he held in his hand, when suddenly the hi-i-i-i-i war-cry was heard; the natives were attacking the camp. Arrows began to fly, and one wounded Bobo's hand, so that he dropped his breakfast. He promptly put his other hand to his

NATIVE HUMOUR

mouth — a gesture expressive of astonishment or disappointment — and shook his head.

“Come here, Bobo,” says the lieutenant, “and let me look at your hand and stop the bleeding.” “Ah, lieutenant,” exclaims Bobo “—— the hand and —— the bleeding ; what I should like to know is who will give me another breakfast now that my chicken has been tumbled on the ground and got so dirty that I can’t eat it.”

One day I organised a wrestling match, and Bobo’s adversary was a Mongala boy named Mambila, surnamed Moana N’zau (son of the elephant). They were a well-matched pair, but Bobo was a bit the better, and at last Mambila had to give in. Deeply mortified and furious at his defeat, he burst into tears of rage. Bobo looked at him in astonishment and tried to console him, begging him not to be angry, as it was all “fun,” and that another day the luck might turn in his favour. But Mambila was inconsolable, till at last Bobo, with a fine gesture, handed him over the prize he had just won, saying, “Now don’t be angry any more ; you got the licking and you shall have the prize too.” All the boys knew that Bobo would never get angry, so they teased him accordingly. One day he asked me for the loan of my shot gun and a cartridge and promised to provide us with game. I granted his request. As he made his preparation he was subjected to a running fire of chaff from the boys ; they begged him with mock humility not to kill *all* the game ; one suggested that it would be well to put the butt to his

A HIPPO STORY

shoulder and not the barrels, if he did not want to hurt himself; another said that if he saw a guinea-fowl the best way of hitting it would be to shoot in the opposite direction, "for if you aim at it, you are sure to miss it." So Bobo went off hoping for a good fortune in his expedition.

About an hour later we heard shouts and roars of laughter on the road leading to the forest. It was Bobo on his way home, empty-handed, being greeted by the boys and about a score of other natives. They had gone to meet him, each with a huge basket on his back, "to put all the game in," as they said. Bobo laughed loudest of all.

On one occasion I noticed that Bobo had two enormous scars on his right leg, and I asked how he had been wounded. "When I was at home," he said, "I wanted to marry the girl who was my father's slave, but he wouldn't let me; so I took my knife and stuck it twice into my leg with all my might and said I would go on if he would not give me my sweetheart; and," he continued roguishly, "I got the girl."

For some time the natives had been complaining of a hippopotamus which came on moonless nights and played great havoc with their plantations. I tried hard but did not manage to get a shot at the beast, so at last I was obliged to have a pit-fall dug, which, in native fashion, was carefully covered up with branches, earth, and grass. On the evening of the second day Bobo came in greatly excited to tell us that he heard snoring in

A HIPPO STORY

the pitfall and was certain some beast had been caught. We took torches along and there, sure enough, was a huge hippo. To put an end to its struggles the lieutenant fired his Mauser rifle at it; but the hard-nosed bullet only hit a fleshy part, and the hippo, stung by the pain of the wound, managed to struggle out of the hole by a great effort and disappeared in the darkness. Later in the evening I was making my regular round near the workmen's camp, and hearing them chatting about the great event of the day, I stopped to listen without being seen. Bobo had just asked for silence and was relating the following story, which I give as near as possible word for word.

"Now, my dear boys, our friend the hippo has just about got home, and his wife is just exclaiming: 'Oh my mother (=good gracious) where have you been all this time; here am I with the children still waiting supper.' 'Don't grumble,' says the hippo; 'I have had an awful adventure.' 'What was that?' says the wife. 'Why, I was strolling about, as I do in the evening, cropping a mouthful here and a mouthful there, when all of a sudden the ground gave way under my feet and I found myself in a great big hole. You may imagine my astonishment. Oh, I thought, so those men have been at it again and laid traps for me; don't they think themselves awfully clever? Well, as I am tired, I'll just lie down and have a comfortable nap in this hole, and then before sunrise I'll get out and go home. So I went to sleep, but as I snored

METEMPSYCHOSIS

rather loud the men seem to have heard me; at any rate I woke all of a sudden and saw a crowd of men standing with lights at the top of the hole. I began to feel a bit uncomfortable, especially as I saw Bobo amongst them, who is so awfully clever and strong, you know. I tried to get out but could not manage it, when all at once a man stepped forward; I saw a flash, heard a bang, and felt him prick me in the back with a needle. The place was really getting too hot for me, so I made an effort, jumped out of the hole, ran straight home, and here I am; so now, my dear, let us have supper at once.’”

These people believe in the transmigration of the soul, and when a soul is supposed to be in an animal they speak of the animal as if it were a man. I tried to tame some young guinea-fowl, and kept them in a cage; one day they escaped, and I chased them with my fox-terrier, a very soft-mouthed animal. He caught them every one and brought them to me without hurting them. Kalala saw it and exclaimed, “If that dog is not a man, I am a dog!”

When I was in Kikwit my dog never showed any animosity against the native Bambala, who are clean, well-dressed people, but whenever one of the Moyansi, who are shabby and rather dirty, came near he barked furiously. “Do you know why he does so?” asked my Mombala boy. “We Bambala don’t eat dogs; the Bayanzi do, and he has found them out!”

It is of the very greatest importance in a country



AN ABUNDANT CROP OF HAIR

The Babunda are blessed with an exceptionally abundant crop of hair. The women shave this, but men let it grow as long as ever it will, and they are immensely proud of it.



A RESTFUL POSTURE

This Bakwese is standing in a favourite position of rest. When on a long march, it is considered an unwise thing to sit down, as the limbs become stiff and further progress is sometimes impossible.

NEGROID LOGIC

where there are only a very few Europeans to keep one's temper; experience has taught me that when you scold a man you only add fuel to your anger. So when some one had to be hauled over the coals I used to say to my "secretary" (an illiterate boy), "Now, Meyey, just tell him my opinion." Off went Meyey, using alternately French, English, Dutch, German, Hungarian, and Kimbala bad language to the evildoer.

When Meyey himself was the misdemeanant I told him to go in front of the looking-glass and insult himself; at first he felt the disgrace very keenly, but one day I noticed that after abusing himself he chuckléd behind my back. "Hallo, Meyey," I said, "are you not ashamed of all the bad things you have said of yourself?" "Not much," he said, "for though I said them, you know I did not mean 'em."

I wanted to learn something of the native calendar, so I asked Meyey how many months there were in the year. Negroes often answer one question with another. "Do I clean your boots every day?" he said. "You do." "Do I make your bed?" "You do." "Do I clean your room?" "Yes." "Do I wash your linen, lay the table, clean the plates, knives, and forks, and give the dog a bath every day?" "Yes, certainly." "Now, when I have to do all this, how can I find time to count all the months in the year?"

I remained in Luano for fully six months, and the anecdotes related above are of course not a

SETTLING DOWN

tithe of the whole. When I went there I did not know how long I was to stay, so I established myself as if I were to be a fixture for the rest of my natural life. Missionaries are as a rule longer lived than traders or officials, and in part this is due to the fact that they look to the future and effect improvement which will be to the benefit of their successors, if not to their own advantage. The official, on the other hand, never feels that he has his home in the Congo; all his measures are temporary, and if perchance he does do something which aims at permanency, his successor probably disapproves of it, and abolishes it lock, stock, and barrel.

So far as State property is concerned, a stop has now been put to this waste by an ordinance forbidding new-comers to demolish any of their predecessor's work without special leave from the district officer; and to this must be attributed the beauty of the Government settlements which has aroused the admiration of so many English travellers.

My first attempts at plantations did not long survive; they were on a gentle slope, which gradually sank towards the river. When the rains came my whole stock of trees found a watery grave, for after ten minutes' rain the slope on which they were planted was like the bed of a torrent. I discussed with the natives the advantages of a dam above the station to divert the inundations, but I was prevented from making arrangements for the execution of the work by an unexpected call to Bala, thirty-five miles north-west as the crow flies. Imagine my astonish-

AN EXPENSIVE AMUSEMENT

ment when, on my return eight or ten days later, I found a solid dam 3 feet high and 200 feet long. The natives had joined together to complete the work as a surprise to me, and declined any payment for their labour. This was, however, a somewhat expensive amusement for me; for if payment is refused it is etiquette to give presents to the people concerned, and these are worth considerably more than the wages.

I could now set to work on my garden; I laid down large lawns in front of the house with several flower beds. At the back I made a large kitchen garden on one side and on the other a plantation of rice and a nursery for trees.

On my visit to the various chiefs I had from time to time received presents of goats, many of them exceptionally beautiful specimens. I now had some forty she-goats, any of which would have done credit to me in a show, and a he-goat of great size, whose bell earned him the name of "Muffins," promptly metamorphosed by the natives into "Mufinzi." The amount of milk given by a single African goat is almost negligible, but the size of my herd gave me ample supplies of milk and cheese, the latter prepared by my own hands.

The care of my gardens, of my plantations, of my rice field, and of my herds meant no small amount of labour for my men, and to their credit be it said, there was not only nothing in the way of shirking, but I did not need to do more than issue my orders in the morning and I was sure to

DOMESTIC POSSESSIONS

find them executed in the evening. Even when I was absent, as was often the case, on journeys of some length work went on just as if I had been present. This state of things is quite exceptional, and I can give this character only to the Bahuana and the Southern Bambala among the tribes which I know.

It is essential, of course, that the right people should be chosen, and then they take a real interest in their work. It may be of use for me to mention that the most intelligent man should be put in the kitchen garden, where he will soon learn to love his plants and take a pride in them when they thrive under his care. To the goats should be assigned the most stupid of the labourers, and he will hit it off with them far better than one who is mentally better endowed.

One day the natives found some guinea-fowl's eggs in the bush and brought them to me. I had them put under a hen and hatched, and the young guinea-fowl followed me about like so many dogs. When I was in my coffee plantation I had only to point to a caterpillar on one of the trees, and the whole flock of them would jump up and quickly remove the offending object. Singularly enough, although they are more prolific and more savoury than fowl, the natives do not rear them; but the experiment would be well worth the making. Unfortunately my flock came to a bad end; my successor had not been a fortnight in Luano before the fancy took him to taste guinea-fowl, and before long all my pretty chickens had disappeared.

GAME IN LUANO

One day a couple of live pigeons were sent me from the Kasai, and I shut them up for a few days and then let them out, hoping that they would come back again. I told Kalala to look after them, and he promptly undertook the task; in the evening he reported that three had returned. On the following day the number had increased to four, and two days later to six. I knew that pigeons are very prolific, but I could hardly believe that the rapid increase of my flock was due to their fecundity, and I was puzzled to explain the additions to my possessions, when Bokale told me that some European before me had kept pigeons, but he having eaten their young, they had flown away and disappeared into the forest. In all probability the survivors of this flock had resolved to return to civilisation.

I had a cat which was on very good terms with Fox so long as she had not the cares of a family upon her. When kittens arrived Fox developed a habit of carrying them to the remotest corners of the establishment and then bringing them back to their basket, and his proceedings were by no means agreeable to the mother. A serious quarrel resulted, in which the old cat made a hasty exit from this vale of tears. Kalala swore to Fox's innocence, but it was rather from a desire to save Fox from a thrashing than because the facts corresponded with his disposition.

There was plenty of shooting in Luano. So far as the feathered tribes were concerned, I had ducks, francolins, guinea-fowl, pigeons, green and otherwise,

A GREY GOOSE

and so on ; also the forest francolin, a different species from the bush francolin, very difficult to shoot and hitherto unknown to science ; it stands higher on its legs and is darker in colour ; the cry too is quite different. Between Luano and Gangan there were considerable herds of buffalo and antelope, and at night troops of elephants penetrated into Luano itself.

Although I have shot nearly every bird and animal of any size in Africa, for difficulty and excitement I give the palm to francolin shooting ; the birds are in high grass and are never more than two in number ; when they are put up they fly in different directions, so that the next shot is at a single bird.

Perhaps the most exciting incident in my sporting experiences was concerned with a grey goose ; and though it happened near Mosongo, it may be appropriately introduced here. We were in considerable straits for food, and great was the jubilation when I winged a goose which fell into the long grass bordering the road. Now the grey goose is a good runner, which scurries through the grass in such a way that the vegetation is not moved and its presence is not disclosed. Our mouths watering, we searched for our grey goose for three full hours, and when at last we gave up in despair, it was to find the carcass of our booty reposing in the middle of the road hard by, half eaten by ants.

If I aimed only at effect, I should say that I left Luano with a bleeding heart, for I had learned to love

LEAVING LUANO

the place and its people ; but if I stick to the truth, and admit that wandering is my real element, I cannot say more than that I quitted it for Kikwit with some regret, taking with me the promises of many of my people who offered me their services in my new abode if I should be in want of hands.

CHAPTER XIII

In the forest—Geographical licence—The Red Congo—Spread of cannibalism
—The Southern Bambala—A European resident—Caught in a game pit—
The rubber shrub—A people of the chase—An international settlement
—A henpecked Chief—Adrift—Crossing the Luchima.

THUS I found myself once more on the good ship *Marie*, on my way up the Kwilu to Kikwit. Madibi we found in a state of profound peace, as was only to be expected. From Kongo to Michakila the banks of the river rise higher and higher and a dense forest everywhere clothes them, down to the water's edge, to such an extent that an error in steering lands the boat among the branches of the trees.

Half-way between these two places is a long bend of the river, with a tongue of land between which can be readily crossed in ten minutes, though the steamer takes half an hour to make the detour by water; in the bend is a village, and the inhabitants make a point of greeting the boat on the one side, then going across the neck and awaiting its coming on the other side.

To really appreciate the African forest it is necessary to traverse it by water, and by preference in a dug-out on the surface of a small stream, 15 or 20 feet broad. In the forest itself the view of the traveller is obstructed by a dense green wall a few feet away; and even if undergrowth be absent, he literally cannot see the wood for the trees; at most he perceives a few trunks in his immediate neighbour-

IN THE FOREST

hood. Matters are still worse in the early morning and towards sunset, for then arises a damp earthly smell which is most unpleasant and renders the air quite unbreathable. On the march the traveller knocks his knees or his feet every instant against branches, stumps of trees, roots, &c., and even the good native paths are occasionally obstructed by fallen trees round which a track must be cut. Armies of ants lurk beneath the fallen leaves, and only make themselves perceptible when they exercise their jaws on some tender portion of the body. Then it is too late to flee, and one does not know in which direction the road to safety lies. True, it is much cooler in the forest at midday than it is elsewhere, but for really good going commend me to the bush, even though the unclouded sun beat down fiercely enough. In the bush I have done twelve hours' travelling in a single day without feeling the worse for it, but in former years, when I was younger and stronger, I kept to the forest, with the result that I was continually suffering from fever.

After Michakila navigation becomes somewhat dangerous owing to the numerous rocks, though of course Captain Rodenburg was a sufficiently skilful pilot to avoid them all. Ten miles south of Michakila we reached the mouth of the Kwengo, here only some 60 feet broad. Higher up this river is fully 600 feet broad, and the waters, thus narrowed to one-tenth of their former channel, pour into the Kwilu with such torrential force that a dug-out, even with additional paddlers, cannot stem it, and a small

GEOGRAPHICAL LICENCE

steamer has likewise been swept back when it sought to make its way up.

Kikwit is a European settlement, called by the natives Matari, after the stone which there forms the banks of the river. It is curious what liberties geographers take with native names in Africa: in my map are to be found Ilongonga, the real name being Bushonga, Dumba (Molasa), Luchima (Kingongo), Murikikamba (Chifuta), &c. The new names are sometimes those of rivers near the villages, sometimes those of the chiefs, and sometimes chosen absolutely at random. On the Upper Luapula I heard the white leader of an expedition ask a native, "Where are we now?" When the latter replied, "Kasenge" (on the sand), he promptly assigned this name to the new station in the belief that it was the aboriginal name of the locality. On the whole, it seems more reasonable under such circumstances, if a new name has to be found, to take a European one rather than a word which is meaningless both for natives and for white men.

The inhabitants of Kikwit are Bambala, whom I distinguish from those of Kolokoto by calling them the Southern Bambala.

The Southern Bambala are a comparatively tall people, slenderly built, very wiry, and of very great powers of endurance. They are the best tempered and the most hospitable natives I have met during my stay in Africa, and I think I must abstain from describing their qualities in detail, being too much prejudiced in their favour.



SOUTHERN BAMBALA YOUTHS

The Southern Bambala have rather an effeminate appearance, but they have great powers of endurance. Always gay, easily made happy, they are very friendly to Europeans and make most desirable neighbours and companions. Unlike the Northern Bambala, they do not practise cannibalism and regard the custom with abhorrence.

THE RED CONGO

The land of Southern Bambal is the Red Congo. They paint the whole body and articles of wearing with red pigment ; any gift which may be presented to the traveller, be it an egg, a fowl, or a goat, is coloured red, and if white cloth is given to them they at once proceed to colour it their favourite hue. The passing of so many people painted red tints the grass on the paths leading to the villages red, and the traveller coming in contact with this tinted grass naturally adopts the native colour.

The Bambala of this region are very good-looking people, and they know it. The ornamentation of their persons is their chief occupation. When at home the paint is renewed twice or thrice a day, while the arranging of a suitable and fashionable head-dress takes several days.

With Bambala carriers I was crossing a country where a sudden attack might be expected every moment, and my caravan came to a sudden halt. When I inquired the reason of this I was informed that one of the men had asserted he was handsomer than another, and that they were just fighting it out. This is not an exceptional incident ; wars that have lasted years have been fought between chiefs because one had insisted he was of greater beauty than the other.

In other parts of the Congo when a native wants to compliment you he will tell you that you are rich, strong, and fat. The Bambala says you are young and beautiful.

The most striking difference between the Northern

SPREAD OF CANNIBALISM

and Southern Bambala is that the latter do not eat human flesh, and abhor cannibalism. I think there is no doubt that the northern tribe have adopted cannibalism from their Bahuana and Byanzi neighbours. It is certain that cannibalism is spreading through retaliation, for people coming in contact with cannibals see those who have fallen in war eaten by their enemy, and it is a natural act of revenge to eat the first prisoner that falls into their hands. In the region of the Lukula, where cannibalism is very rare, when a man is eating human flesh he is surrounded by the admiring village, and one or other of the spectators who till then has not been a cannibal will make a point of doing as much as the original hero of the feast, and when a man once has begun to eat "the meat that speaks" there are very little chances of his leaving it off again.

The peculiar class of *Muri* described in Chapter IV is distinguished by the same type of bracelet, the *mwena*, and the same headcloth, *yepi*, which, however, in the south is worn only at *milonga* (palavers). To each *mwena* bracelet is attached a particular name, which is assumed by the wearer; he does not, however, discard his former name, but may be called by either. The peculiar custom, in accordance with which in the north the successor to the *mwena* must steal his predecessor's skull, is not found in the south; the following suggestion may explain this fact. The Bayanzi are recognised as the suzerains of the territory which the Northern Bambala have acquired by purchase from them; and in recognition of this fact, they

THE SOUTHERN BAMBALA

have a right to the skulls of all people killed in war among the northern tribe (perhaps even to the whole body in the days before the Bambala adopted cannibalism). These skulls, together with those of their own people and their enemies, the Bayanzi chiefs keep all together in a separate little hut, a sort of museum, and refuse to part with them on any conditions. This fact very probably led to the stealing of the skull of the deceased *Muri* in the north.

As all primitive people, the Southern Bambala treat their slaves very well. A newly purchased slave must give all his earnings to his master, but after a short time he is allowed to keep them for himself.

When a married woman perceives that she is pregnant, she must confess all her former lovers to her husband ; if she forgets the name of a single one it is believed that the child will die. The lovers she had before she was married pay a nominal fine, but those she had after her marriage must pay down a heavy sum. The marriage seems to become definite only when a child is expected, for then conjugal fidelity becomes obligatory on both parties, as the child is otherwise supposed to die, and death of infants are generally attributed to this cause. In such a case the parents must undergo purification. Clothed in a new palm-clothed skirt, they are led by an old woman, the aunt or sister of the wife, to the river and dipped thrice into the water.

The Southern Bambala have the same instruments and songs as the northern tribes, but they are much

A EUROPEAN RESIDENT

better musicians, and their songs are much clearer to our ears.

It must be mentioned that children play often with crossbows, and it is curious to observe that grown-up people have not yet adopted it.

In my chapter on Luano I have mentioned that I recruited labourers for other factories, and some of these had come to Kikwit, so that my reputation preceded me. I was received with open arms, and as their language was identical with that spoken in the north I was exceptionally well placed. A few days after I arrived in Kikwit disturbances were reported at Baba in the Bakwese country, about three days' march to the south-west. I was very anxious to proceed thither, but the Bambala were less so, as the country is very poor and the inhabitants are not on very good terms with the people of Kikwit; they, however, spontaneously offered to act as carriers on my expedition. I may here mention that all this southern area is bushland with the exception of the narrow fringe of forest which is found along all rivers, and which assume slightly greater dimensions on the Luchima. I was accompanied by a European on his way to Murikikamba. When we arrived in Baba it was the old story over again. The Resident had played the fool and had incensed the natives by his treatment of them. They declared that if I had not come they would have killed him. As I was at liberty to follow the dictates of my reason, I packed him off to the Kwilu on his way to Europe to seek another field of activity. The Bakwese refused to carry the



A BAPINDJI HUT

The doorstep of the Bapindji hut is on a level with the ground; this makes ingress and egress not much easier than the high Bambala door, for the entrance is so low that one has to assume a creeping position to be able to get through it. In a climate like that of the Congo bouses are only used for sleeping purposes; this may explain why these butts are not built high enough for anybody to stand erect in them.

A EUROPEAN RESIDENT

loads of their enemy, and my Bambala were equally unwilling to burden themselves with the goods of "this idiot." However, I detached a few of my men to do what was required, and as he was leaving addressed him in the native language in the following term: "I have ordered my Bambala, if ever you try any of your tricks on the road or even only scold one of them, to chuck your goods into the bush and run away. Now you know how you have to behave." I have reason to believe that the hint was taken by my European friend.

When he set out the natives looked on without a word. It was only when he was out of hearing that the rejoicings began; the reason of this was not fear, for they had nothing to fear from him. It is common to find among the English peasants who are ladies and gentlemen and who yield to none in the tact which they display; and though European travellers are sometimes disposed to overlook it, tact is also a quality possessed by the native of Africa.

Two other Europeans joined forces with us in Baba, also bound for the south, and when we started we formed an imposing caravan of a hundred men.

On the first day we crossed the Yambesi by a vine bridge. This is made by loosening from the trees the wild vines, which twine themselves round their branches; when the ends have been brought sufficiently low, poles twelve feet or so long and six inches thick, are made fast to them, and, if necessary, other vines brought from the forest to make the vine

BRIDGES

cables equal to any strain likely to be put upon them. To the end of the first pole is lashed a second, which is likewise attached to the branches of the overhanging trees on both sides. More and more poles are brought, to the number perhaps of a dozen in all, till the river is bridged, each pole being made fast as before. The bridge is not horizontal from end to end, but rises some 12 feet in the middle, the centre poles being attached to the highest branches on each side. The total breadth of the bridge is simply the width of the pole; but there is no danger of slipping off, as the sides are guarded by a network of vines 3 feet high, which form an effectual barrier.

Such bridges are for African circumstances absolutely luxurious; and the traveller may think himself fortunate who finds such an one at his disposal. Nevertheless the natives still talk of a traveller who was seized with giddiness on the centre of one and did not venture to advance or retreat, his retirement being eventually effected by a sturdy native who carried his helpless fifteen stone of dead weight to the safety of the shore.

We camped at Kisamba, and as the Kwengo is here quite close, three of us went to bathe in the river. On the way back we sighted some guinea-fowl, and I had the unhappy idea to send Meyey and Fox to put them up, myself making my way through the bush, gun in hand and my eyes anywhere but on the spot where I was next to put my foot. It was in the forest area near the river, and before I had gone far I felt the ground give way

CAUGHT IN A GAME PIT

beneath my feet, and was in less than no time at the bottom of an antelope pit, rather shaken up but otherwise unhurt, as I had luckily fallen straight on my feet. My gun went off as I fell, and Meyey, seeing me disappear, rushed off to my companions to tell them I was killed. They promptly returned to look for my corpse and found me in the pit smoking a cigarette, more out of bravado than anything else, for I did not feel much in need of one at the moment. As a rule the antelope pit has a sharp stake in the centre to impale the animal. This was the second adventure of the sort which befell me in Africa, and as luck would have it, the stake was absent in each case, otherwise these pages would probably not have been written.

A vine was cut and lowered to me; I had nearly reached the top of the 18-foot trap, when Fox could not endure the separation any longer and jumped to meet me. I did not descend again, but sent Meyey down to rescue him.

The other time that I found myself in a pitfall was in the Katanga. I was travelling with a European, to whom I had lent some carriers, as his purse was rather light. On the way we saw some guinea-fowl which tempted me, and this time I fell into a 12-foot pit and had no boy with me to fetch help, only a fox-terrier which howled on the brink. I had a Mauser rifle with me, with which I had brought down a few guinea-fowl, and, as a signal of alarm, I fired off fifteen shots in succession. As nothing happened I repeated the discharge, but no

THE RUBBER SHRUB

white face looked down into my prison. Finally my native boy arrived and rescued me, and when I overtook my friend, inquired whether he had not heard the firing. "Oh yes," said he, "but I thought you were attacked, so I went on." So did I with all my carriers, including those I had lent my courageous friend.

Our journey was made at the beginning of the rainy season when all the grass had been burnt and the new plants were just springing up. Consequently we were well able to see the extraordinary abundance of the rubber shrub, *Landolphia Thollonii*, which grows in the plantations, in the bush, even on the road. It is a thousand pities that the poverty of the land makes it difficult to work the rubber, for the people here are not lazy, and do not even require to be urged to work. If a trader has some article which takes their fancy, men, women, children, all turn out to work in order to gratify their taste for the trader's wares.

The fourth day after leaving Baba we arrived in Murikikamba, where I rested for two days in order to put my geographical notes in order. Murikikamba is inhabited by Balua, a branch of the great Lunda people. It is probable that their advance to their present country, which resulted in their driving out the Bambala from the Kwengo, was caused by their being themselves driven by the Badjok. It will therefore be appropriate at this point to give some account of the latter people.

The Badjok are a branch of those people known

A PEOPLE OF THE CHASE

variously as Kioko, Kioque, Chiboque, and Vachioko. Various Luba chiefs led off expeditions of malcontents, among whom were two named respectively Muzumbo Tembo and Ndumba Tembo. The second of these founded the Kiolo, of whom the Makosa are a branch. Most authorities agree that these events took place early in the seventeenth century.

The Kioko people grew up in the neighbourhood of Kangombe, on the plateau land where the sources of the Luando, Kwango, Kasai, and Lungwebungu are situated, in close connection with the Luchaze and Lobale peoples. The most striking feature of the Kioko in later times is that they were essentially a nation of hunters and iron-workers, but principally the former. As has been stated, the dominating immigrants were not hunters but an agricultural people, so their fame in the chase must be referred to the aborigines whom they subdued.

The occupation of hunting naturally induces an adventurous and self-reliant character, and encourages a roving disposition, so it was not long before the Kioko began to expand. Buchner states that the Northern Kioko may be divided into three branches, that of Ndumba Tembo (a descendant of the founder), still occupying the Kwango-Kwanza plateau; that of Mona Kiniama, on the Kwilu; and that of Mona Kissenge beyond the Luachim. The two latter appear to be offshoots of the former, and it is from the second of the three that the Badjok of the present chapter seem to be derived.

In the time of Buchner the Kioko were crossing

A TREELESS COUNTRY

Lunda state in two compact lines, following the courses of the Kwilu and Luachim, and the Lunda empire stood in great danger of being cut into sections by them. Schutt relates the first arrival of a Kioko in the territory of the Bashilange, and Wissmann speaks of the ivory trade between the two peoples as having been established some years; the latter also mentions the Kioko as far north on the Chikapa as about $7^{\circ}30'$ south, and Buchner states that in his time they had reached to 7° south, having moved up from 10° south in twenty years. They subsequently continued their progress northwards as far as 6° , but were driven back to 7° by the Bapindi, assisted by the Bakwese and Babunda as related below.

Murikikamba is situated on the border of a swamp; in the whole country there is not a tree to be found, so that when the European settlement was established it was necessary to build the houses of the midribs of palm leaves; a very picturesque effect was thus produced, but hardly a lasting one. Inside, the walls are tapestried, and as the country is much above the sea-level the temperature inside the house is none too high. I broke my aneroid long before I reached the southern plateau, so I had no means of discovering the height, but that it is considerable may be judged from the fact that in the early morning and late evening Europeans regret the absence of their winter overcoats.

The Balua of this district decline to act as carriers to Europeans, and they have reason on their side,

AN INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT

for if they wish to earn money they have only to go into the bush and collect rubber plants to earn far more than they could by a corresponding expenditure of energy as carriers. As a result of this the settlement has quite an international appearance; all the tribes of the Kasai, as well as the Bambala and the Bayanzi, are represented among the workers in the factories; the Luano men were, of course, exceedingly glad to see me, and were highly gratified when I greeted them by their names.

Food is exceedingly scarce, so much so that it is the rule for men to work only five days in the week, the sixth being devoted to a trip to a distant village for the purchase of food. It is astonishing how little food the Balua require. A little cassava bread, here called *musa*, suffices for the whole day; but the people of the Kasai, and still more the Bayanzi of the Kwilu, who are very large eaters, complained of lack of food, though their ration money was four times as high as it was elsewhere. The natural remedy would be for them to lay down their own plantations; but they make contracts for only six months, and besides, they have not got their wives with them; so that this means of increasing the supply of food has never been adopted.

The Kasai people are somewhat better off, as they have their wives with them, which not only prevents women palavers, but also allows them to make their own plantations.

I decided to follow the course of the Yambesi on

A GREAT CHIEF

leaving Murikikamba, as it was up to that time unexplored. It flows through a sterile swampy valley, the surface of which is composed entirely of sand ; there are but few villages in it on account of its sterility. We wished to cross the river, but it was not until we were twenty miles north of Murikikamba that we found a very primitive bridge. At this point the river turns north-eastward, and we made our way along the right bank as far as Mosongo. When we drew near we found all the warriors out in the fields in open formation, but, taking no heed of them, we passed through their line and entered the village. My carriers being Bambala, soon explained to their fellow tribesmen how peaceful my mission was, and before many minutes had passed the chief arrived to welcome me.

He was, for a negro, exceptionally fat—a real Daniel Lambert, and his behaviour would have qualified him to play a part in a comic opera. He bustled about scolding everyone for not having made preparations for our reception ; calling three of his wives he inquired whether they had prepared any food for my people, and when they replied in the negative he waxed wroth, said he had given orders to that effect, and, with one eye on me to observe the effect of his remarks, he began to expatiate on his greatness, on the terrible punishment that the disregard of his orders would entail, and so on ; finally, catching up a native broom, he was about to chastise his wives when, with a unanimity astonishing in an African chief's family, they joined forces, clenched



A SUSPENDED GRANARY

To avoid the depredations of rats and of other vermin, the Bapinji have devised a suspended granary for those articles that are of special attraction to rodents, as for example ground-nuts. These granaries consist of big basket-like structures which are suspended on poles in the village.

A HEN-PECKED CHIEF

their fists, and with many bitter words gave him in my presence a sound thrashing, during which he continued to ejaculate, "I am the chief, I am the chief!"

The chastisement over, the chief wife put her arms akimbo and inquired, just as a nagging wife in Europe might do, what more he wanted. He turned to me and explained with attempted ease of manner that his wives were always very playful; I learned, however, in the village that he was badly hen-pecked, and that the situation was regarded as a great joke by his people.

I wanted to make my way eastwards to the Luchima, and I asked for some one to guide me through this unexplored tract. The chief, glad perhaps to get away from his wives for a day, offered his services; but he played me a very nasty trick. After leaving his village he led me southwards, pretending that it was necessary to do so in order to find a bridge over the Djari. But after several hours' march, I found that he had brought me to a village over which a friend of his was chief, for no other purpose than that the latter might receive a present from me. I retraced my steps without entering the village and proceeded on towards Luchima.

When we reached the Djari there was, of course, no bridge; I asked my carriers if they could swim the river with the loads on their heads, but they said they could not. Accordingly I ordered them to make a bridge, provided them with axes, and sent them out to cut the logs; this involved going some distance, and

CROSSING A RIVER

in their absence I and my boys swam across the river and sat down to enjoy our lunch. When the carriers returned, seeing what pains they had laid upon themselves, they appeared to reconsider their position. One of the men came to the bank and shouted, "The people say they cannot swim, but they would like to have a try." I raised no objection to the experiment, and they plunged into the water. Whether it was true or not that they could not swim before I will not undertake to decide; at any rate as soon as they were in the water they took to it like ducks and were quickly on the other bank. What I saw of them later made me quite sure that they were experienced swimmers.

When they arrived, Kalala danced a wild war dance round them and improvised a song to accompany his performance, in which he sang my praises, telling how I taught the Bambala to swim by making them cut logs. Kalala was the admitted buffoon of the party, so his chaff was taken good-humouredly.

We lodged in a hamlet, and the next day reached the banks of the Luchima, which is some 300 feet broad, a foaming torrent at most seasons of the year. The people of a Bakwese village proposed to ferry us over on rafts, which are composed of three logs of very light wood about 6 feet long, lashed together with vine ropes. Including the paddler the burden is only one man and a load, which may be replaced by another man. The paddle is a pole about 4 feet long, forked at the end, with four

ADrift

or five palm ribs inserted to give more hold on the water.

The air seemed full of bees, and small flies were very troublesome; they settled on one's person continually, and a sting resulted from any want of care in getting rid of them. Hoping to find them less numerous on the other shore I decided to put across. Under ordinary circumstances the paddler goes upstream some hundreds of yards and brings his craft to shore on the opposite side, just opposite the original point of departure. I had no confidence in the raft, so I decided to undress and swim behind, Meyey and the paddler being on the raft. By some means the latter lost his paddle in mid-stream and we drifted down-stream at the rate of ten miles an hour. Unfortunately raft regulations are unknown on the Luchima, and there was no policeman at hand to hold us up. I shouted to Meyey to hold tight and then set to work to swim my hardest, pushing the raft in front of me to the other shore, but the current was too much for me, and it was not till I saw a fallen tree partly spanning the river that a means of escape presented itself. By a great effort I drove the raft in the direction of the tree and found myself happily none the worse for my adventure, save for bruises and scratches innumerable from the branches.

The paddler, after constructing a new paddle, returned to the other bank; the Bakwese thereupon declared that they would only put us over if I would add to the payment already agreed upon certain objects, and then they enumerated all that the black

CROSSING THE LUCHIMA

man's heart could desire. But I was not to be bluffed, though I was separated from my people. I told two of my men, a Motetela and a Moluba, who were excellent oarsmen, to take charge of the raft, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing my men and goods on the same side of the river as myself. Depositing on the ground half the payment which the Bakwese had originally asked, I took my leave of them without further formalities.

The crossing of the Luchima had occupied fully six hours, during the whole of which time I was continually exposed to the attacks of the above-mentioned flies and bees. The main difficulty of the route overcome, we set out for Luchima village. The only item of interest on the way was a wood, which attracted my attention because I did not see a rivulet to account for it. When we entered it I found that in it was a lake, the name of which my people declared to be Yanza; but probably this word means no more than "lake."

Luchima is one of those arbitrary names given by Europeans, the real name being, as mentioned above, Kingongo. The native village, which is of very considerable importance, is inhabited by Bakwese of the Bakwamosinga sub-tribe; in this village there are, as so often happens, three chiefs, to the oldest of whom the power should theoretically belong; but, as in other cases, it is the youngest who is practically the most important. Although I myself never had any trouble with this man, I consider him to be a most dangerous individual; he is highly intelligent but absolutely

LUCHIMA VILLAGE

untrustworthy ; but as he is a person of great consideration in the surrounding villages, it is necessary to be on very good terms with him.

I made a stay of two days in the village to recover from my bruises and regain my strength, and then undertook a journey which is of such importance that it merits a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER XIV

Tribes of the interior—An African Napoleon—Conservative chiefs—A lean country—A miniature State—Bearding the lion—A formidable stronghold—A inevitable situation—A State reception—Exposing a wizard—A successful embassy.

I HAD up to this time carefully concealed from my people the real object of my journey, but now, being near my goal, I had no need to be secretive, so I told them that I wished to visit Yongo, chief of the Bakwamosinga. They seemed to be much astonished, but after a short discussion among themselves a man stepped forward and said that the people had decided to follow me wherever I went, trusting to me to prevent them from coming to harm. "It shall not be said of us that we left our master in the lurch; we are not Baluba."

In order to explain this allusion I must mention that some two years before a European with Baluba carriers had been attacked by Bapindi and shot in the leg; he got into his litter, but the Baluba, instead of carrying him away, left him to the Bapindi, who murdered him. But such is the respect which the European enjoys in this district, that instead of misusing his body, they set him up in his deck chair, and left him there. When the question of giving him decent burial arose the Baluba slunk

TRIBES OF THE INTERIOR

away, and the Bambala spontaneously offered to fetch the corpse, at great risk, from among the hostile Bapindi.

The Baluba are apt to give themselves airs and to speak of the indigenous populations among whom they are as *Basenji* (bushmen); but on such occasions the Bambala never fail to remind them of the inglorious part which they played in the incidents connected with the death of Sasi, as they called the European in question.

The Bakwese say that their tribe is divided into five sub-tribes, two of which, the Imbangala and Baachinjii, inhabit the Upper Kwango, while the others, the Bagwandala, Bakwamosinga, and Bakwasamba, are found on the Kwilu. Of the two former tribes, the Imbangala make frequent trading expeditions to the Kwilu, where they are received as brothers.

The Bakwese inhabiting the Kwilu region immigrated approximately in the middle of the last century. This date is based on information received from the chief of the Bagwandala, who, a very old man himself, stated that his grandfather had been of the migration. The reason for leaving their old country must be connected with the troubles between the Portuguese and the great chief of the Imbangala, of which historical records exist.

When the Bakwese arrived in the Kwilu region the Bagwandala settled on the left bank of this river; the Bakwasamba and Bakwamosinga went on the right shore fighting the Bapindi and Babunda

TRIBES OF THE INTERIOR

whom they found there. It may be imagined that the invaders had a troublous time after this, for not only had they to fight the first occupants, but they had continually to repel the raids of the Badjok who menaced them from the south.

After one of the numerous wars the Babunda were obliged to pay an indemnity, partly composed of slaves, to the Bakwamosinga. Among these slaves was a boy named Yongo, who adopted the cause of his new country, and took part in the wars against the Badjok. His bravery brought him into notice, so his master gave him his freedom by presenting him with a bracelet. Shortly afterwards he married the daughter of a chief, and his influence became such that when the chief died he not only usurped the chieftainship, but gradually reduced to a condition of vassalage all the chiefs except Momambulu, the head-chief of the Bakwasamba. At last, tired of supporting a continual struggle against three tribes, the Bakwese of the right bank of the Kwilu decided to emigrate, and the leadership fell naturally to Yongo, Momambulu following his guidance. They recrossed the Kwilu, drove off the Bagwandala not under the direct rule of Murikongo, and settled in their present home.

This settlement was not effected without several severe battles, in which the victory naturally fell to the immigrants, who had been for some time well versed in warfare, while the Bagwandala had, during the same period, been living the life of peaceful agriculturists. The section of Bagwandala



A SOUTHERN BAMBALA GIRL

In the Congo the traveller, if he has not made himself unpleasant, can always rely on the goodwill and kindness of the women. On the other hand, they resent an insult to the village or the tribe readier than the men and stir them up to seek revenge. This Southern Bambala girl has been photographed when beaming a friendly welcome to the white stranger.

AN AFRICAN NAPOLEON

who were thus driven out went towards the north-west into the barren plains they now occupy, where they live in considerable straits owing to the sterility of the country. This movement of the Eastern Bakwese occurred about twelve to fifteen years ago. Yongo divided the country into several provinces, placing one of his brothers-in-law at the head of each. Part of the newly acquired country was given to Momambulu also; it seems that Yongo regretted his generosity, because at the end of 1906 he attacked the Bakwasamba and took some of their territory. In fact, it was only due to my influence that he did not annihilate them.

Although an old man now, this African Napoleon, Yongo, did not consider his career of conquest terminated. He said that when the plains of his country were exhausted he would take those of the Bagwandala, which are exceedingly rich in rubber. I believe that he has been prevented from doing so already by the general respect which Muri Kongo enjoys, for although he dare face any enemy, he does not dare to face public opinion, and there is no Bakwese who does not hold Muri Kongo in veneration. Blue blood counts in Africa as well as in England, and this old chief is always considered the rightful king of the country.

Amongst the Bakwese both men and women wear a dress composed of a square cloth. This is sometimes of native make, but much European cloth has been obtained through the Imbangala, who import it from Portuguese territory. Chiefs wear a

CONSERVATIVE CHIEFS

long cloth reaching from waist to ankle and a second piece over the shoulder. Yongo may be mentioned as an exception, but he certainly is a man who attaches very slight importance to his dress. No head ornament is worn as a rule, but at Katchaka I acquired a wig-cap, which I was told was worn on festive occasions.

All free people wear bracelets, and when a slave is presented by his chief with this ornament he becomes *ipso facto* free.

As for the dressing of the hair, it is very difficult to say which is the real Bakwese hair-dress. The majority of the people wear plaits like the Bambala, but as the chiefs have their hair coiled into five bunches, it may be supposed that in former times this head-dress was in general use. It is a characteristic of many African tribes that though the common people easily adopt foreign customs, the nobility and chiefs strictly adhere to the habits of their forefathers, just as the House of Lords is the stronghold of conservatism in England. I have met tribes where European cloth is in general use, but the chiefs, who possessed a very great stock of European goods, refused to wear it. I never saw a Varega chief dressed otherwise than in bark cloth, and all great Baluba chiefs wear skins round their loins. The European cloth is reserved for burials.

Men shave as a rule, but most of the chiefs let their beards grow. Both men and women wear indiscriminately in the left or right ear a long cane

A LEAN COUNTRY

snuff-box, often prettily carved; also, although the nasal septum is often pierced, curiously enough nasal ornaments have never been met with. Neck ornaments are made of beads, teeth, sections of reeds, cowries; men wear knives on the upper arm thrust through a fibre armlet, which is ornamented with a tassel.

The chiefs excepted, people paint themselves with red ochre, but they are far less coquettish than the Bambala.

Food is scarce in this country, game is rare, and domesticated animals are very few in number. It must be kept in mind that the Bakwese are of recent immigration and, as invaders, they are always exposed to attacks, specially the people of Yongo, who are hated throughout the country. To this must be attributed the habit of making their plantations round the houses always ready in case of attack. Agricultural work is done by women, and the produce belongs to the head of the family. Their bread, *musa*, is made in the same manner as that of the Bambala, but owing to the insufficient sifting of the flour, it is dark and considered of very bad quality by the neighbouring tribes.

The Bakwese are not cannibals except the small section who have adopted this habit in the last few years in consequence of contact with the cannibal Bapindi. The non-cannibal Bakwese do not despise them on this account, but there seems no tendency to imitate them.

I have mentioned in another chapter that palm,

A MINIATURE STATE

wine is scarcely intoxicating. The Bakwese having had, before their immigration, contact with the Portuguese, have brought from them a liking for stronger stuff. In boiling the palm-wine they obtain a drink which is highly intoxicating and takes the place of *aqua ardiente*. Tobacco is smoked in gourd pipes, and snuff is in general use.

Houses, built by men, are made of grass; they are small and very badly kept; even those of chiefs look like ruins. The only houses of which greater care is taken are the storehouses of the chiefs, of which they possess several. Each wife has her separate hut, in which she lives with the children.

Some very beautiful wood-carvings have been seen amongst the Bakwese, but I believe that at any rate many, if not all of them, have been imported from the Badjok. The basket-work is very good, and their mats are ornamented with very pretty patterns.

They are very clever traders. Unfortunately they have such a reputation for dishonesty that the neighbouring tribes prefer to have nothing to do with them. The currency most in demand is salt in crystalline form.

The chiefs of the Bakwese are absolute rulers; they have a council of elders, whose advice they take when it suits them. The three main chiefs appoint sub-chiefs for the villages; in some cases several are found in the same village, and theoretically their order of precedence is by age. But, of course, the most energetic man, even if he be the younger, will



CICATRICES AS TRIBAL MARKS

Ba'bunda women have lozenge patterns cut into the skin of their abdomen; the cicatrices of these wounds are their tribal marks. Whereas the men of this tribe let their hair grow very long and wear it hanging down in a thick plait on their backs, the women shave their heads.



A FISH BASKET

Fishes are mostly caught in traps and in baskets. Some of the baskets are very big; they are fastened between the sand-banks and the fish do the rest. Fishing in the river is the men's occupation; in swamps it is done by women

A MINIATURE STATE

enjoy all the power. Tribute is paid to the local chief, and the great chiefs take whatever they have a liking for; but they are very moderate in this, for exaggerated demands would not be tolerated by the people. A chief never sits on the ground; some have beautiful chairs, the supports of which are carved animals. Differing from other tribes where important people are not allowed to be seen eating by anybody, the Bakwese chiefs are served by the elders, who assist at their meals.

The Bakwese show particular skill in the making of the small native piano. Though the keys are only slips of bamboo, they are tuned to perfection. I cannot say anything about their songs; they seem to abstain from singing in the presence of strangers.

As to morality, there are two different standards amongst the Bakwese. Theft, rape, and even manslaughter are considered by the Bakwamosinga and Bagwasamba as acts of heroism; but the Bakwandala, who are peaceful agriculturists, highly disapprove of them.

The reader will perhaps understand why the Bambala, who had twice seen how Yongo handled Europeans, were astonished at my plan when I say that, on the first occasion, the party consisted of forty men armed with guns, the European leader being not only no coward, but a regular dare-devil. Nevertheless, Yongo compelled him to pay a ransom of about £40 before he would allow the carriers to depart, a sum which was given not because the leader feared Yongo, but because he felt certain that any other

BEARDING THE LION

action on his part would bring him into collision with the State. It may be imagined how this incident tickled Yongo's vanity.

On the second occasion two Europeans were promptly shut up in a dark hut on the plea that the natives wished to make some fetishes; and all night long they heard them invoking their images to prevent the cartridges of the Europeans from going off if there should be any hostilities. The following morning, however, to their great satisfaction, they were released unharmed.

It was impossible to make any man understand that the Europeans had retired, not because they were afraid of Yongo, but because they had no right to fight it out. So I left them to their belief, and allowed them to imagine that I was bolder than the other white men. But as the Bambala on these occasions had been plundered by the Bakwese of all small property, it was not unreasonable for them to display some reluctance to accompany me, and their consent was a mark of great devotion.

After leaving Luchima we descended a steep slope into the valley of the Biere, a foaming river with a rocky bed, which we crossed on a pole bridge about 50 yards long. Thence we mounted the plateau again which separated us from the Lufuku, behind which lay Yongo's village. In all the intervening villages I heard expressions of astonishment at my proposed visit, and many were the complaints against Yongo. After crossing a small river we arrived in a small village called Maginoka, the first of the Bakwasamba

YONGO

tribe, who were at war with Yongo. They said he had attacked without reason, had dislodged their chief from his village, and destroyed everything; they asserted that they had fought hard for their rights, and showed me in proof of it their wounds, which were all in the front of the body. They advised me not to trust Yongo, not to visit him unarmed as I was, but to return and fetch soldiers, as the country was not safe as long as his power was unbroken. I felt much pity for them, and promised to do my very best to obtain for them an honourable peace, but they shook their heads, and opined that I should never come back to tell them the joyful news.

I continued my journey, and after about an hour and a half I arrived at a swamp about half a mile broad, on the other side of which lay the Lufuku. As a Moluba who was with me knew Yongo, whom he had seen on another occasion, I charged him to tell the chief that I had come to pay him a visit, and wanted to have a friendly chat with him. I said that I was coming unarmed, and that I hoped he would have his people so well in hand as to restrain them from committing any depredations on the goods of my men; but I warned him that, if this were not so, I would return on a later occasion, and he would then have to take the consequences. About an hour later the messenger returned with the information that Yongo would be delighted to see me, and that his intentions were no less friendly than mine.

It is always prudent to send a messenger in advance in Africa; for, if a big caravan approaches,

A FORMIDABLE STRONGHOLD

especially with a white leader, the villagers are uncertain as to its intentions, and disturbances may result. As a rule, a village informed in advance will make preparations, and if you are told that you are welcome, it is but rarely that any precautions are needed.

Yongo village, named after its founder, is situated in a strong position between the Lufuku itself, bordered by a swamp, and the Ponde, whose course lies through the middle of another swamp. It is a natural stronghold, and any attack upon it would be an exceedingly dangerous proceeding, for it is impossible to cross the raging Lufuku either on rafts or by swimming, and the simple bridge over it would not survive a few blows of an axe, while the crossing of the Ponde involves half an hour's wading thigh deep in a swamp, a position which does not conduce to quickness of movement.

It was Yongo's habit to cut down the bridge as soon as a caravan had crossed it, thus keeping them prisoners until he had selected anything in their loads which took his fancy.

The village itself contains many thousands of warriors, and extends over a large area. Bows and arrows are not their only weapons; they possess muzzle and even breech-loaders, purchased by the Imbangala for them in Portuguese territory. When I had seen my loads safely deposited on the right bank of the Lufuku, I found myself greeted by a howling crowd of men who brandished their bows and guns in their hands; their intentions were, however,



THE XYLOPHONE

As found among the Bapinji, this is a highly developed instrument of music; it is well tuned in a scale closely resembling ours. The blades are made of hard wood, and each blade has a separate sounding-box, consisting of a dry gourd attached underneath. Some of the players are real artists, and play a great variety of tunes on their instrument.

AN UNENVIABLE SITUATION

good ; they merely wished to show off their strength and their guns, of which they are exceedingly proud. As I proceeded on my way the numbers increased continually, and they raised deafening shouts of "Kwakola, Deke."

A clear space had been swept for my reception by the elders of the village, and when I reached it they invited me to sit down and, with their brooms, kept the crowd at a distance. One of them explained to me that Yongo wished to do me especial honour in coming so far to meet me, and desired that his own slaves should transport my loads into his enclosure. At last he arrived, followed by several slaves, and my loads were shouldered and carried off ; I had simply to follow. My tent was pitched in the enclosure and I sat down to await events. My situation was perhaps hardly enviable ; I was responsible for all the people who had followed me ; and if the third *rencontre* between Yongo and the white men resulted in the discomfiture of the latter, the consequences would certainly be serious. After a time an old man came and said that Yongo was ready for our meeting ; I followed him to a kind of shed behind the houses, and there the chief was seated, while behind him were a number of upright sticks with a human skull on the top of each. He was surrounded by several old men and against him leant Totchi, his favourite son. He was simply dressed in a loin cloth, and one single bracelet of brass encircled his right arm. He was clearly a man of exceptional physique, though his height was disguised by his sitting

A STATE RECEPTION

position. His hair and three days' old beard were sprinkled with grey, and from his face I gathered that he suffered much. The swellings of his hands and feet clearly showed that his complaint was rheumatism of the joints.

I made him a complimentary speech through an interpreter, for I had had no opportunity of learning Kikwese, and told him how far I had come and what dangers I had faced in order to make his acquaintance. He replied in a laudatory speech which lasted about half an hour. At any rate, with all his faults, he did not err on the side of exaggerated modesty. The subject of his discourse was "Yongo the great, the great Yongo, the most mighty king of the mightiest people, who had overcome the most powerful enemies, &c., &c." To hear him one would have imagined that his warriors outnumbered the sands of the sea or the grass of the bush. Even the terrible Kioko, he said, trembled before him; he had eaten them, as he had eaten the Bapindi and the Babunda, and as he was about to eat the Bakwasamba. There-upon we shook hands and the ordinary palaver began.

I began by reproaching him with his depredations on caravans, and said that though he might have beaten the Kioko, it would be a different matter to come to blows with the Europeans. He had already, I pointed out, weakened himself by his conflict with the Bakwasamba and must take heed to his ways, if he did not wish to come upon evil times.

I said that in the course of my travels, which, as my people knew, had extended into all the countries



ENTERPRISING TRADERS

Enterprising negro traders from Angola not unfrequently visit the southern part of the Congo. As they stay usually for many months, or even years, they build villages of their own, which differ greatly from those of the natives. They are mostly respectable people; slave raiders are only met with in regions far removed from European influence.



THE LONG BOW

The Southern Bamhala are excellent shots with their long bows; the bow, which is fairly broad, is at the same time a weapon of defence, as it is used to turn off the arrows coming from the foe. Spare arrows are held in the left hand, and a big bundle of them is usually stuck into the girdle. A spare bowstring is worn round the head all ready for use.

APPRECIATING A JOKE

of the world, I had once met with a chief whose hand was against every man; soon every man's hand was against him, and his foes, joining forces, had wiped him off the face of the earth. That would be his fate if he did not look to the future; all the surrounding tribes—the Bapindi, the Bambala, the Babunda—were friendly to the Europeans, and if he involved himself in a conflict with the white man he would find all his enemies unite against him, and his place would know him no more.

I urged him before all to make peace with the Bakwasamba, who were of the same race as himself, and my words seemed to produce a deep impression. For he retired to take counsel with his elders, and after a time he announced that he had decided to make peace with his neighbours. The next item on our programme was the exchange of presents, and I duly received my share; but when it came to giving something in return, I assured him that I was far too much impressed by his account of his greatness to feel equal to making him a gift of any sort; it was simply out of my power to make an adequate offering to so great a man. Thereupon he laughed heartily, appreciating the joke to the full.

I then withdrew to my tent, and soon after he came to return my visit with his son Totchi, who, as a Chikongo scholar, was able to play the part of interpreter. Our conversation turned on general topics, and Yongo showed himself to be a man of considerable shrewdness and ability. Probably the greater part of the harm which he did was in reality

EXPOSING A WIZARD

the fault of his brother Chatula, the chief magician, who always urged the people on to injure Europeans and the neighbouring tribes.

My people fraternised with the villagers and spread abroad my fame as a doctor, not forgetting to exaggerate my virtues, as became trusty followers. I used a circumstance arising out of this to do Chatula an ill turn, which went far to destroy his power. He came to my hut, and displaying some bad sores on his legs, asked me to treat them. I agreed to do so, and secretly sent word to the villagers to come to my hut. When they arrived they found me doctoring their doctor, and I promptly pointed out that though he might foist his ridiculous remedies upon them, he came to a European when it was a question of healing his own diseases. The crowd howled applause, and from that day Chatula's power began to decline.

In the evening some of the women came to me saying that they had heard of my beautiful pictures and longed to have an opportunity of seeing them. I obliged them, but soon the crowd grew to unmanageable dimensions; those at the back began to fight for a sight of them, and it was only the intervention of Yongo which prevented a serious riot.

I stayed one more day in the village and had several conversations with Yongo. In one we were treating of the terms of peace with the Bakwasamba when Chatula interposed. Simulating rage, I sprang up and said to the crowd that I had come from far to speak with the great chief, and who was this slave

A SUCCESSFUL EMBASSY

that ventured to give his opinion when two great men were talking. Chatula took his punishment quietly and, on the whole, Yongo was not displeased.

Although my mission was crowned with success, I turned my back on Yongo without reluctance, and retracing my path as far as Luchima, I headed directly for Kikwit by the shortest road. News travels quickly in Africa, and it had already been made known far and wide that I had been completely successful in my embassy to Yongo, and had not even given him a present. Of course on the road my people gave still more exaggerated accounts of what I had accomplished with their help. When we reached the Luano, not far from Kikwit, my men asked me to stop, which I did. They all bathed and painted themselves elaborately in red. Shouting and singing we made our entrance into the station, which we had left about a month previously, to be received by a huge crowd drawn from all surrounding Bambala villages as a friend whom they had already given up, but who now reappeared contrary to all expectation.

CHAPTER XV

Native etiquette—Treatment of women—Fruits of experience—Native gestures—Character of the Negro—Mental traits—Just criticism—A good-tempered race—African women—The labour question—The golden rule—European solidarity.

I THINK I may say without exaggeration that I have always been successful in my dealings with the natives, and I attribute it to one thing alone—my respect for their customs. It is only by studying a man that you can understand him, and only by understanding him that you can rule him. When, therefore, the white man undertakes to rule ten thousand times as many black men, he is bound by all the laws of reason to make a study of their habits, prejudices, and mental constitution, otherwise he is foredoomed to failure.

A European once spent three years on the Kwilu, and when he engaged his first batch of servants and had concluded his contract he ordered them, possibly for reasons of cleanliness, to cut their hair short. He was a good fellow, and had not the slightest intention of wounding their feelings. They obeyed, but from that day to the end of his stay he had a singularly bad reputation among the natives; and solely because he had compelled his servants to cut their hair short—a proceeding which in the native view entails personal dishonour.

NATIVE ETIQUETTE

Many Europeans regard it as rather clever to make fun of the religious or magical ceremonies of the peoples among whom they find themselves; but they could make no greater mistake if they wish to win the confidence of the natives. For by so doing they naturally disgust the priest or magician, whose influence in turn reacts upon the people. To show anything but respect towards objects or acts connected with the native ideas of religion is as foolish as it would be for an African to enter a church in England and make fun of the officiating clergyman or of the services which are going on.

A thorough knowledge of native ceremonies, on the other hand, may be a means of gaining great popularity. A small present to the village fetish is often of greater use than a big present given to the chief. I have read somewhere of a man who gained a great reputation for amiability by the simple device of offending everyone in order to have an opportunity of offering a humble apology; this may seem very funny, but in practice it works exceedingly well. I practised this to a certain extent among the women of the Kwilu. Thus, when a Bambala woman has been confined, she is secluded in an enclosure behind the hut; it is composed of poles, from the tops of which depend connecting ropes of palm leaves. Entrance into this is strictly forbidden for any man, at any rate for any stranger; but I took every opportunity of going in to have a look round, and then paid my fine, to the great satisfaction of the villagers.

A fine awaits any man who takes a new-born

NATIVE ETIQUETTE

infant into his arms, but I made a point of picking them up and paid up on the spot, to the immense pleasure of the natives.

Natives have the greatest objection to any mention of their own death ; but how many times have I not heard a European say to some old native, "Hello, not dead yet?"

There is absolutely no object in disregarding native etiquette. For example, if you invite an old chief to drink with you he will be bitterly offended if you wait for him to drink first ; possibly it is a relic of a time when he feared death by poison as soon as he ventured to take food or drink except among his own people ; but the fact remains that native custom requires the host to drink first, and it is as useless to fight against it as against the European custom, equally a survival, of giving the right hand in greeting.

In most parts of Central Africa an important man will never eat in the presence of other people. Anyone who does so simply makes himself ridiculous in the eyes of the natives.

It is a good rule never to say to a native anything that can even seem untrue. They are themselves prone to untruthfulness, but when they first come in contact with him they consider the white man to be their superior in this, and if you are suspected you are on the way to degrade yourself to their level. Boasting is equally dangerous, and ten times should he reflect who thinks it well to threaten the native. For if you have declared that you will

TREATMENT OF WOMEN

do this or that, you *must* do it. A white man once came into the village of Kisai in a famished condition and asked the chief to sell him one of the chickens which he saw running about. The chief declined, and the European said he would take the fowl himself and pay for it; the chief replied quite coolly that it might be unwise to do so, as the offender would possibly be shot by one of the villagers; and the visitor thought prudence was the better part of valour. So it was, but ever after when he came into that village he was laughed at as the man who did not dare to take the chicken.

If you want to live in peace respect the native women. In Luano there is in the settlement the grave of a European who was killed in Lusubi in 1900 for joking, possibly without evil intention, with the wife of a native. The natives respect the white women, and expect you to respect their wives and sisters. In a recent case in East Africa it was asserted that the natives had insulted European ladies; I do not know enough about the half-civilised natives of the coast to pronounce upon the point, but the native of the interior is utterly unlikely to commit such an act.

Even in the most dangerous parts of the Congo, where a man would require a strong military escort, a white woman would always be able to pass unmolested.

The European in Africa does not always sufficiently realise his position; all eyes are fixed on him, as they would be on the king at a public function

AN INDEX TO REPUTATION

in England. It is no use for the white man to say to himself that he is in Africa in the "bush," and that it does not matter; he should in point of fact be far more instead of less careful.

It is of the utmost importance to treat one's own people well. There are many people who treat strange natives well and expect to enjoy popularity in consequence; but if their boys have to complain of ill-treatment or lack of consideration the master gets a bad reputation, and cannot make out why he does not get what he considers to be his deserts.

The name which the natives confer on a European is often an index to his reputation; the hair-cutting individual above-mentioned enjoyed the cognomen of *Koy* (leopard), and the natives do not care to come in contact with the leopard. Another man was known as *Bao* (fire), and warning was thus given to those who came in contact with him that he was ready to flare up at any moment.

It is easy to know what your boys think of you by listening to their conversation in the evening; if they speak of you as *Mundele* (the European) it is a sign that they dislike you; if they use your name, it is a mark of indifference; while if they call you *Tata* (father), you may know that they are fond of you. A devoted boy will absolutely identify himself with you; he will speak, as I have already shown, of "we" and "us"; he will be as pleased when you get a present as if he got it himself; and when you give away your property,



A MOBUNDA

The Babunda inhabit the left bank of the Kwilu; they are easily recognised by their hair-dress, consisting of a very thick, long plait. They migrated to the Congo from Angola, and although they conquered their present country many years ago, are still on the war-path with the older inhabitants. They are the greatest agriculturists and stock-breeders of the region.

FRUITS OF EXPERIENCE

even such as he could never hope to receive, he will feel regret.

A European who travels is naturally unable to make a change in his suite whenever he comes among a new tribe; and he will necessarily be accompanied by many foreigners. His servants will often consider the natives who are not in the service of a European as quite inferior people, and will take every opportunity of showing it. The slightest lack of control over the personal followers will permit them to get out of hand, and begin to oppress the natives by pillage. It is quite useless, if a native comes to make a complaint against one of your followers, to make any investigation; it is absolutely certain that your follower is in the wrong. In nine cases out of ten in which white men have fallen victims to the natives, the fault has lain with the followers. The simplest thing is to keep your people round you; and even when they have received their ration money, to purchase food for them yourself. Great troubles may thus be avoided at a small cost. When one of your followers complains of being short of money on the road, give him the advance he asks for; if he wants something and cannot buy it, he will certainly steal it, and then there will be a risk of disturbance.

Do not tolerate gamblers among your retinue; not only will they corrupt your other servants, but their example will infect the whole country, and the same applies to people who smoke hemp.

The importance of a knowledge of native languages has already been pointed out by many other travellers,

NATIVE GESTURES

and there is no need to enlarge on it more; it is sufficient to say that, in my opinion, it is quite impossible to travel in security if, for your communications with the blacks, you have to rely upon the untrustworthy intervention of an interpreter. There is no situation, however difficult, out of which you cannot escape scatheless if you only know how to speak to the people.

Europeans have sometimes misunderstood native gestures, and awkward situations have arisen. Perhaps it may be of interest to mention a few signs used by the inhabitants of the Kwilu.

Negation,	Shrug of the shoulders.
Affirmation,	Raising the eyebrows.
Admiration for a girl,	Shutting the eyes after looking sternly at her (=I only have eyes for you).
Pointing,	Is done not with the fingers but with the lips.
Calling a person,	Back of the hand uppermost, draw the half-bent fingers inward.
Astonishment,	One hand before the mouth, shake the head from side to side.
Very great astonishment,	Arms at full length by the sides, snap the fingers, and say "My Mother."

It is easy to understand that mistakes may arise; if, for instance, a man is accused of theft and shrugs his shoulders, meaning thereby to deny the charge energetically, while you understand that he does not care what you say.

CHARACTER OF THE NEGRO

The brightest period of the intellectual life of the negro is between the ages of ten and twelve ; after that age he falls into a slough of sensuality, and his powers fall off, but up to that time the youngsters easily hold their own with European boys, allowance being of course made for the different lines on which their education has proceeded. It often happens that travellers test the powers of natives by reference to their arithmetical capabilities ; the Australians are represented as very low in the scale of intelligence because they often have no numerals above three, though they are perfectly well aware that there are numbers above three, and they actually have names for their children in order of birth up to number nine both in males and females.

In Africa questions of number and time have very little relation to the practical affairs of life in spite of their extensive trade. I once had a conversation with a Mohuana boy ; I inquired how many eggs he had. "One less than ten." "How many is that?" The boy opened his fingers and proceeded to count, "One, two, three . . ." up to nine. I said I would take all but one, and in order to find out how many had to be paid for, the boy again counted them over. In the same way he failed to tell me how many two and two made or how old he was, and so on. When I asked him how many days there were in the week, he had first to name them in succession before he could give me the right answer—four ! On the other hand, the native has as minute a knowledge of birds, beasts, and plants as is possessed by the most enthusiastic

MENTAL TRAITS

collector in Europe. Every native can tell you all about the fauna and flora of the neighbourhood. The Bambala distinguish sixteen species of field rats, the Bahuana are a good second with eleven. Birds are not only known by sight, but also by their nests and their cries. Plants are distinguished by individual names, and it is only in speaking with Europeans that general terms such as "grass" are used. Except for figures their memory is good, and when they have once visited a place its details are impressed upon their brain so that they do not forget them.

In powers of observation they are strikingly superior to Europeans. They can detect not only the direction from which sudden sounds come but also locate the point at which they originate. If a partridge calls, they can show you the very bush in which it is sitting, though it may be two or three hundred yards away.

But they are not so universally curious as some uncivilised races; they can tell you little about the heavenly bodies, even in the way of mythological details; in fact, the Bambala have a story which positively deprecates curiosity in these matters. They say that the Wangongo once wanted to know what the moon was, so they started to go and see. They planted a big pole in the ground, and a man climbed up it with a second pole which he fastened to the end; to this a third was fixed, and so on. When their Tower of Babel had reached a considerable height, so high in fact that the whole population of the village

JUST CRITICISM

was carrying poles up, the erection suddenly collapsed, and they fell victims to their ill-advised curiosity. Since that time no one has tried to find out what the moon is.¹

It has already been remarked that the negro has a curious habit of replying to one question by asking another. It must not be supposed for a moment that they mean to be insolent; but it is a habit which easily provokes the European to lose his temper, and when the temper is lost the advantage of the European is lost too.

New-comers in savage lands are too often forgetful of the fact that they are intruders; traders and travellers especially should bear in mind that they sojourn in the land by the goodwill of the native, lacking as they are in the support of the European Government. An uninvited guest may, under favourable circumstances, receive hospitality in Europe; but what would happen if, instead of recognising his position, he proceeded to order his hosts about and remodel their household arrangements on his own lines?

Colonisation is in itself an injustice, for it means that one race subordinates the wishes and even the moral and material advantage of another so-called "inferior" race to the enrichment of its own emigrants, or of capitalists who remain at home and know nothing of the misery which their greed for

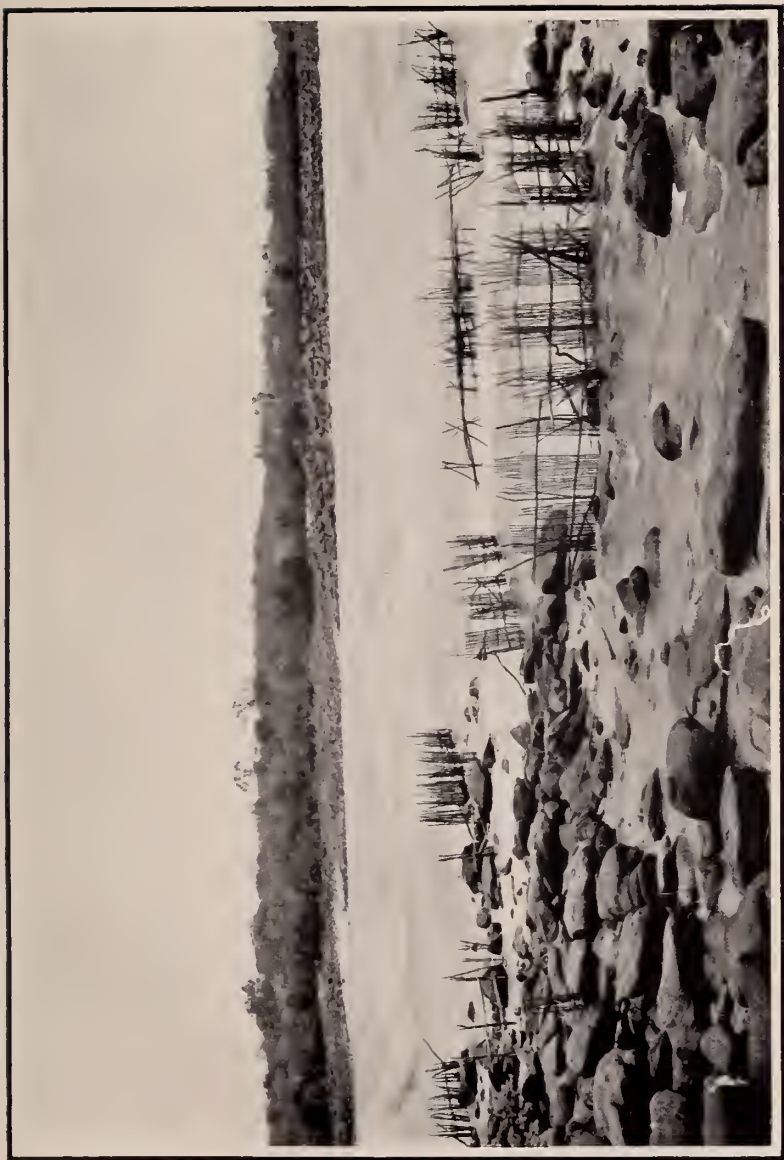
¹ Since completing the manuscript of this book, I found that this same story is quoted by Jacottet, *Études sur les langues du Haut Zambesi*, Part II., p. 115, as existing among the peoples of the Upper Zambesi.

A GOOD-TEMPERED RACE

gold entails. If an alien race is to be led it must be by a close study of their mental constitution, their habits, their religion, and their capacity for accepting new ideas.

The European who goes to Africa for the first time is prejudiced against the natives by the tales of white men on board ship or on the coast. He is prejudiced by observations of the negroes on the coast, for these have all the vices of both black and white races and the virtues of neither. If anyone wishes to know the negro as he is, let him abstain from forming any opinion till he gets away from the littoral and meets with natives uncorrupted by bad spirits, European morals, and the love of gain by fair means or fraud.

I have twice crossed the Congo Free State and I can honestly say that I have never come across a tribe which was not naturally good-tempered. It may truly be said that, broadly speaking, these people only wish to live in peace themselves and are quite ready to let everyone else live in peace. Perhaps this may seem to be at variance with the continual inter-tribal wars, which have so often figured in the preceding pages; but it must be borne in mind that the serious war is an exceptional thing; as a rule these tribal differences are no more deadly than mediæval tournaments. Just as in Australia the first wound was the signal for the cessation of hostilities, so in Africa; only in the latter case the proceedings terminated with a palaver and the payment of compensation.



FISH TRAPS

Fishing is an important occupation with all the riverside inhabitants and is one of their favourite sports. Fish is the staple flesh food of many tribes, and is often cured so as to last during the rainy seasons, when the high water prevents the capture of a fresh supply.

AFRICAN WOMEN

The native lives the life of a country gentleman, it may be said; after breakfast he goes out shooting; then he goes to quarter sessions (*milonga*); after this he calls upon a few acquaintances and possibly a lady friend or two; and if it is moonlight he winds up by going to a ball. Some who are fond of liquor join company with a few friends in the evening and make up a drinking party, after which the faithful followers carry the noble lord home. It must be remembered that on the Kwilu chief, free man, and slave all lead the same life, whereas in Europe only a small proportion of the community are able to lead the life of a country gentleman.

Woman in Africa is the subject of much misconception; she is represented as a mere beast of burden, condemned to undertake the most laborious tasks, the absolute slave of her husband; but although she is the tiller of the fields, the land is so fertile that the work involved in the cultivation of the ground is far from being severe. As a result the women have a good part of the day to themselves, which they occupy with gossip like the idle woman in Europe.

Both sexes, especially in their youth, devote a large part of the day to their toilette, which, simple as it may appear to us, yet demands for the due accomplishment of its rites far more time than a first glance would lead the observer to suppose.

It is quite natural that when a European bursts into this idyllic life and requests a people, thus

THE LABOUR QUESTION

brought up, to work, they do not like the idea. But if he can show them goods which irresistibly appeal to their love of finery or some other aboriginal instinct, that is quite a different matter. If you show some beads to a man it will never occur to him to work for them. But give a small present of beads to a woman and the wives will leave their husbands no peace till they have earned for them an equal or superior stock of these valuables.

In the Kwilu fashions change quite as rapidly as they do in Europe; and herein perhaps lies the explanation of the rapid solution of the labour question, which is almost non-existent, for the difficulty is not to get labourers, but to find the *right* men to work.

Of course the strongest stimulant, literally and metaphorically, is alcohol, but fortunately the laws of the country forbid its importation, and the trader has to find some other means of spurring on the black races to toil for him—a less easy matter than may be imagined.

Fear is a bad counsellor; when strangers come face to face they are apt to be afraid of each other's intentions, whether they be white or black. Many attacks, on either side, are due, not to enmity or mere superfluous martial ardour, but to fear. When it is reported that a European has killed a native, it is generally safe to assume that he is a pessimist, who sees danger everywhere and jumps to the conclusion that those who approach him do so with unfriendly intentions. Of course the climate is

THE GOLDEN RULE

against him ; his liver is probably permanently out of order ; and the excessive heat predisposes him to rashness. But the fact remains that Europeans are too prone to regard the native as an enemy and to treat him accordingly.

“ Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you.” Although the natives are not Christians, they live up to this commandment far better than most professing Christians. If one man has food it is quite natural for him to share it with his fellows without being asked ; when a caravan is preparing to start there is no need for a man to ask his neighbour to give him a hand when he wants to put his load up ; his neighbour comes to his aid of his own accord. In the same way, on a journey a carrier who falls sick is relieved of his load, and in bad cases may even be carried in a hammock by his companions. A strong man will exchange his light load for the heavy load of a weaker tribesman and so on.

It even happens that the innocent slave of an important chief who has committed a crime will give himself up to justice and admit the crime ; he will suffer punishment and even allow himself to be put to death without withdrawing his confession, and it is this that makes the task of the European magistrate particularly difficult.

The greatest obstacle, however, to the administration of justice is the solidarity of Europeans and the natural reluctance of everyone to report to a magistrate the misdeeds of a fellow white man. A settler may be

EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY

at variance with his neighbour and despise him for cowardly crimes against the natives, but if the neighbour gets into a scrape he will always try to get him out of it, even at some risk to himself. No one denies that from the point of view of absolute justice this is a great evil, and it greatly diminishes the prestige of Europeans; but it is easy to overlook the personal side of the question and fail to see how hard it is to refuse the request of a man who comes admitting his fault and recognising that he cannot claim mercy on his own merits, but begs for help to avert the shame from the old people in Europe who are so proud of their son. He may not even ask for active help; it will perhaps suffice that the other man should keep a quiet tongue in his head for twenty-four hours and all will be well.

It is hard to resist such an appeal, especially when it is made to a newcomer from Europe whose home associations are fresh. Seldom will a man under such conditions find it in his heart to send to the gallows even the criminal whom in Europe he would unhesitatingly deliver up to justice.

He finds himself in the same dilemma as our old friend, Huckleberry Finn, when he hesitated whether he should assist the runaway nigger, Jim, to escape, or should give him up; the parson, it will be remembered, had told him that connivance at the escape of a runaway slave would surely be visited by punishment in the Infernal Regions, and the issue of his deliberations was as follows:—

“It was a close place, . . . I was trembling because

EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY

I'd got to decide for ever betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then I says to myself: 'All right then, I'll *go* to hell.'" And the decision of the European when a fellow-white is in trouble is usually to the same effect.

CHAPTER XVI

Original labour—The Bapindi tribe—Stocking the larder—Bye-laws—Preliminary hostilities—A bid for peace—A perilous situation—A satisfactory solution—A native philosopher—A youthful squire—An enthusiastic welcome—The old story—Flattering attentions—A sorrowful parting—"Good-bye, Bambala."

THOUGH it was not till 1904 that it began to attain its present importance, Kikwit had been founded some time previously. It was the establishment of good relations with the Bambala which raised it to the position of the leading commercial centre on the Kwilu. It now serves an area of over 5000 miles, and its importance is still growing. As many as 600 carriers may sometimes be seen waiting to start for the different factories with loads of goods; on the right bank of the Kwilu the men are Babunda, on the left, Bambala.

There is also a native village of Kikwit, but it is unimportant; the village which has made Kikwit what it is—Zimba—lies some half an hour distant to the south-west; it consists of many hundreds of huts, and is probably the wealthiest community on the river, not only because its inhabitants were the first to sell their labour to Europeans, but also because of its agricultural activity. It often happens that hundreds of foreign workers are in Kikwit waiting to be transported to the various factories, and as they

ORGANISED LABOUR

are all fed by Zimba it is natural that the village should rapidly grow rich.

The chief of Zimba is named Matuku, but, as very often happens, the power is in the hands of his brother Malonda. It was the latter who organised the supply of labour on the river, which is so arranged that a man works six months in two years; there are four sets of villages, and at the end of his contract of six months a man goes back home till it is again the turn of his village to furnish labourers; as a matter of fact they look forward eagerly to the time when they will again be able to earn money. Although payment is made to each man individually, the labour is nevertheless to some extent communal in character; for if a man is disinclined to work in the middle of the week, he arranges for one of his fellows to take his place and the wages are shared between them.

The native conception of honesty permits him to cheat a stranger to an unlimited extent; but he never cheats a friend. The Bambala caravans are not under any supervision, but there has never been a single case of a carrier absconding with his load. If a man is taken ill in the bush and has to leave his load, it is fetched by a man of the next village and payment is demanded on the return journey.

Although the Bambala do not abscond before their term is up, there are also Bapindi workmen, and it is for their benefit that the weekly payment of wages has been introduced, for if they took their departure in the middle of the month—a proceeding which might be tolerated but could not be recognised in any

THE BAPINDI TRIBE

way—there would be a considerable amount of prejudice aroused, for the man would certainly say that he had been compelled to work without pay.

The Bapindi are in every way less trustworthy than the Bambala, and they have this reputation among the surrounding tribes. When they are employed as carriers it is impossible to send them off alone, as is done with the Bambala; one of the latter is employed to supervise them. As I never lived among them, but only saw them as labourers in Kikwit, I cannot deal with them from an ethnographical point of view; but their history being better known than that of any other people of the Kwilu, some of it may be given here.

The Bapindi are found in two distinct settlements on the Kwilu. The main body are on the right bank of the Kwilu between $5^{\circ} 30'$ and $6^{\circ} 30'$; a smaller colony is found on the left bank of the Kwengo, between the Bambala and the Bayaka, and there is an offshoot of this section on the right bank of the Kwilu near Kikwit. As far as is known the main section extends eastwards as far as the Kasai, where Wissmann found them settled in territory belonging to Mai Munene, to whom they were paying tribute.

They originate as most of the Kwilu tribes from the upper Kwango, from whence they were driven in the beginning of the nineteenth century by the Kanguri chief. A large proportion were driven to the north, and these are those whom we find now in the Kwilu region; those who stayed in their country lived with the invaders and formed with them the



SOUTHERN BAMBALA MAN AND WOMAN

The difference between the dresses of a Southern Bambala man and woman is very small and lies simply in the different way in which the folds of the loin-cloth fall; it would be considered an impossible thing for a man or woman not to observe this difference, however unimportant it may seem to us.

STOCKING THE LARDER

Imbangala tribe, who again are related to the Bakwese, though the relationship is no more recognised. The Bapindi, adapting themselves to circumstances, have become considerably different in character in the two sections above mentioned. Those in the north have become peaceful agriculturists, while those in the south, who have to continually repel the attacks of the Badjoke, are extremely warlike. Having beaten the Badjoke in the year 1892 through the help, they supposed, of a fetish which they had received from a European, they have destroyed completely a part of the country between $6^{\circ} 30'$ and 7° ; this strip of land serves as a march against the invaders of the south. It extends from the Kwengo to the Loanje.

The Bapindi who are cannibals buy slaves from the neighbouring tribes to stock the larder; they do not enjoy much consideration from their neighbours who say that they are thieves and liars. The experience I had of them seemed to justify this reputation.

At the mouth of the Kwengo the Bapindi weave pile cloth with velvety patterns which are extremely handsome. As none of the neighbouring tribes has a knowledge of such weaving it may be supposed that the Bapindi invented the process.

Where so many different tribes are gathered together it is naturally of great importance to see that a due supply of food is at hand, and with this view a daily market is held in Kikwit, served by the women of Zimba. Supply and demand do not always correspond, and shortness of food having given rise to occasional quarrels, I was obliged to establish a market

BYE-LAWS

police. Sometimes a Mopindi or other native waylaid a Zimba woman on her way to market and robbed her of her produce. I therefore made it a rule that no one, even with the most honest intentions, might approach the women before the latter reached the shed in which the market was held. Here there were thirty men of Zimba always employed in making baskets, and they were naturally ready to protect their own women. I prescribed that if anyone infringed my rule and accosted a woman on her way she was to cry for help, and the men of Zimba were then authorised to rush upon the offender and chastise him thoroughly.

After two or three examples had been made, the presence of the police was sufficient, and thus the supply of food was assured. If the women had been scared away it would have meant starvation for the community of workmen, for there were no other means of securing a supply of food.

I was not permitted to enjoy for long my peaceful life in Kikwit. A war had been carried on between Moangi and Bumba for some two years, and it assumed such dimensions that the peace of the whole district was threatened. I had therefore to set out on an expedition to try to establish peace. I had seen something of the war on my way to Baba, when two men from Moangi had asked permission to join my caravan. In the evening we were sitting round the fires and chatting when suddenly a cry was heard and the two men rolled over, shot by the arrows of the Bumba people who had followed them.

PRELIMINARY HOSTILITIES

This incident had already decided me to intervene, and the spread of hostilities made it still more urgent. I started therefore for Moangi, which is really a congeries of villages separated by considerable distances, all bearing the same name. Each has its own chief, but there is a paramount chief named Matelo, an intelligent man with pronounced Semitic features. The total number of warriors was perhaps 2500. Their opponents were the village of Bumba, a large place of 1500 warriors, which had secured a sufficient number of allies to make the forces about equal. The leader of this group was Kaseko.

The war had originated in the firing of the bush belonging to Moangi by the people of Bumba; this meant that the rats, the principal game animal of this part from the negro point of view, were driven away without the people of Moangi having the chance of shooting them. This infringement of the game laws naturally aroused in every manly bosom the passion for revenge. The people of Bumba did not justify themselves by any appeal to abstract principles; their plea was that an ancestor of Matelo had once done the same to one of their tracts of bush.

Just when I was setting out a Bakwese chief named Jimbu Nene of Kingongo (Luchima) came to visit me, and when he found that I was going his way, begged to be allowed to join my caravan. As a rule it is a mistake to allow friendly chiefs to accompany an embassy; they always have some private advan-

A BID FOR PEACE

tage in view ; but I could not refuse in this case as he had come from a great distance to see me.

In the course of the second day we arrived in Moangi, and the chiefs seemed prepared to accept my intervention, but I saw clearly that they only did so in the expectation of being top dog in the discussion. I carefully abstained from giving details, but set out for Bumba, about ten miles distant, to inform the people that I intended to make peace between them and their enemies. They, too, seemed to have no doubt that they would carry their points.

It was arranged that the two chiefs should come alone and unarmed on the following day and meet me midway between their respective villages to discuss the terms of peace, but this was more easily promised than performed. On the following day the warriors of Moangi, whither I had returned, absolutely refused to allow their chief to set out alone in my company ; and my own carriers, too, insisted on accompanying me to the rendezvous. Not even the threat of my anger sufficed to dissuade them ; for they said they had come as my men, and that if anything happened to me when I was engaged on the task of keeping the peace between two hostile tribes, they would never be able to return to their village, for they would be branded as cowards.

We set out therefore, I with my people, Matelo accompanied by several hundred warriors, armed to the teeth ; and when we arrived at the appointed place, there was the chief of Bumba with all his warriors too. It was a dangerous situation, for one

A PERILOUS SITUATION

single arrow would have started a mighty conflict. I kept the groups at a distance of about 200 yards and tried to persuade the chiefs to dismiss their men and come into the centre alone to discuss matters with me. Matelo was prepared to follow my advice, but Kaseko would not leave his people. Sarcasm failed to induce him to change his mind, though I pointed out how much braver his opponent had shown himself to be. At last one of my own people came up and said, "Deke, this won't do; you will never make any progress in this way. The only thing is for you to go backwards and forwards between them, carrying messages from the one side to the other." So for hours under the burning sun I was engaged in the work of an express messenger, carrying from one side to the other the comments of each party on the views of their opponents.

At last we arrived at a satisfactory solution, and one of the chiefs suggested that I should give them *kissi* (fetish) to make the peace binding. Here was a new dilemma, for I had quite forgotten to provide myself with apparatus of that sort. Meyey, however, had borne the matter in mind, as he informed me, and had brought the necessary materials. One day he had looked into a box of *poudre de riz* in my possession and been told that it was *kissi*; thinking that I might need it on my difficult undertaking, he had brought it with him and he now produced it. So now the powder, whose original purpose was to conceal the ravages made by time in the complexion of a belle, was applied to the head, arms, chest, and legs

A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION

of two African potentates, to the accompaniment of the most horrible imprecations on them, if they should ever renew the war.

In reply to their inquiry as to the ingredients of my *kissi*, I informed them that it was composed of many mysterious components, the chief of which was the powdered skulls of men slain in war ; and in consideration of my efforts to promote peace and of the expenditure of *kissi* I required each of them to hand over to me the skulls of two men killed during the present hostilities. They agreed to do this, and these trophies are to be seen at the present day in the Museum at South Kensington, somewhat dilapidated owing to the way in which their possessors were handled in the fight.

Perhaps some strait-laced people may be disposed to reproach me with encouraging a belief in false gods or the futilities of magic ; but my only object was to prevent those good people from again going to war with each other, and I adopted the sole means of doing so. It would be as reasonable to criticise an English judge who permits a Chinese witness to break a saucer in the Court of Justice. Every people must be sworn in the manner which they regard as binding.

On the following day I left Moangi, and going nearly due south, made my way direct to Luchima, and thence to Yongo, where I found that the chief had been as good as his word, having abstained from any further attack on the Bakwasamba in accordance with the conditions of peace which I had laid down.

A CONTRAST

I pursued my journey to the south and visited several villages ; then, turning west and north, I made my way to the village of Murikongo, the great chief of the Bakwese, who actually rules over the Bagwandala. He is as much respected throughout the country as Yongo is feared. It is quite astonishing to see the difference between the character of the subjects of these two chiefs, a difference clearly due to the influence of their rulers. Yongo orders his men about, threatening them all the time, Murikongo expresses a wish and cheerful obedience is shown. The Bagwandala are a peaceful population devoted to agriculture, and it was a real pleasure to be in their midst after a stay with the boastful warriors of Yongo.

To arrive at the village of Murikongo I had to cross the Biere ; this I did upon a bridge, if so it may be called. It consists of a single log of wood, some 3 feet below the surface of the water, so that the only way for me to cross in safety was for a man to precede me, to whose shoulders I clung for support. One of my sturdy followers offered to carry me over the slippery log to the other side, and I am convinced that he would have been as good as his word, for the Bambala are exceedingly sure-footed. But a feeling of *amour propre* prevented me from accepting his offer.

Murikongo was a charming old gentleman, and it was from him that I got the history of his tribe given in Chapter X. He had travelled far in his youth, having even seen the great salt

A NATIVE PHILOSOPHER

water, of the marvels of which he still had something to say. In the course of conversation I asked him how it was that he allowed his brother to usurp a great part of his power as he did. He replied that he was old; he had seen much of the world and had had rough passages in his life as well as smooth ones. Formerly he had ruled over a land five times as big as that which he now governed, but even then he was not happier than now, for at the present time he was wealthy; he had wives and children, he had only to express a wish and it was done, and what more could a man wish for in the autumn of his life? I learned to love this old philosopher, and gladly promised to pay him a second visit, though, as it turned out, I was not destined to do so, being obliged to return unexpectedly to Europe. I hope to find him alive when I again go back to the Congo, so that I may explain why I was unable to keep my word; his good opinion being of great value to me.

Leaving Murikongo, I went to see Momambulu, chief of the Bakwasamba, with whom Yongo had been at war. I had some difficulty in finding his village because he had removed it from the beaten track, and I found it still protected by outposts, though peace had been established. Our approach was signalled, but some time elapsed before I could see him. When he arrived I saw that the cause of the delay was the preparation he had made for my reception; the most prominent part of his costume was his head-gear, a cap of red cloth

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bordered by two 3-foot wings stiffened with wire, which bore a close resemblance to the head-dress of Alsatian peasant women. His uniform coat must, to judge by its gorgeousness, have once belonged to the general of a South American republic, but the rest of his clothing was hardly to match; it was simply a piece of native cloth round his loins.

He sang his own praises to the skies in his opening speech, trying to impress me with the idea that by my interference I had saved Yongo's life. I did not contradict him, but when he suggested that Yongo ought now to recognise him as his suzerain, I was compelled to tell him that only my intervention had saved him from total destruction with all his people. He admitted the justice of this remark, and said that he had only boasted because he did not know that I was so well up in current politics. He gave me the impression that the events of the war had completely broken him, and for his sake I hope that the white man will save him from his enemies; for he has no energy left, though in former times he was noted for his persistence.

When I paid another visit to Yongo he was troubled at the idea of my having visited all the other chiefs, and suggested that on a future occasion I should stay in his village and let him fetch all those whom I wished to see, Murikongo alone excepted, for whom he expressed a great respect. I laughingly suggested some doubts as to whether

A YOUTHFUL SQUIRE

they would come; but he said I need have no fears; he would bring them along.

It was during this visit that his son Totchi, a boy of ten, asked me to take him to the river to see all the marvels of civilisation, of which Meyey had given such glowing accounts. I said I was quite prepared to do so if his father raised no objection, and Yongo fell in with the scheme. Totchi thereupon attached himself to me as my personal attendant, and did not move an inch from my side; when people came to speak to me he rebuked some of them for coming too near the great man; others he chid because they failed to show their respect and stood too far away. He guarded the entrance of my tent against intruders and kept a watchful eye upon all my belongings. Bit by bit he became confidential and told me all the gossip of the village, among other things that it was not his father who was the evil-doer, but his uncle Chatula. In this he was confirmed by Chatula's own son, a lively imp of five, who said that his father would be only too glad to do me some harm if only he did not fear both me and his brother Yongo.

The next morning Totchi was nowhere to be found, and I was told he had been shut up to prevent him from accompanying me; for the final decision as to his journey lay with his mother's brother, Moata Bondo, and in his absence nothing could be done. I never saw him again, but before I left for Europe I sent him a memento, so I may

AN ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME

be certain that if ever I return I shall always have a friend in the enemies' camp.

We made good time on the way back to Kikwit, and when I arrived I was again greeted enthusiastically. It had become a habit with the people of all the neighbouring villages to assemble when I returned from a journey and, putting me in the middle, to stand round and sing songs. A European who was present remarked to me that though I gave no outward sign I was ridiculously proud of these manifestations; and so I was. I had been away six weeks, and a huge packet of correspondence awaited my arrival; so I sat down under my veranda and got to work on it, and now my popularity proved burdensome; for I had no sooner begun to read a letter than a visitor was announced, often only women or children who came to bring me small presents and could be dismissed after a few words; but sometimes my task was less easy. I was reading a particularly interesting communication, when I heard a warning cough, and, looking up, saw a young lady of fourteen before me with a fowl in her hand.

"Oh," said I, "is it you, Lomano? I am very glad to see you; how do you do?"

"I have brought you a fowl," she said.

"Thank you so much; can I do anything for you?"

"No, thank you," she said, but remained glued to the spot. Politeness obliged me to continue the conversation, and I asked after the news of the

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village. She said there was none save that *Gwangwan* of the village of Kingulu had come to see her father.

"Well, what did he want?" said I.

"To marry me."

"Oh, that's very nice," I said. "Gwangwan is a very nice and very good-looking chap."

"Yes," she said, "but I think that Muri Simuna is better looking."

"Oh, that's what you are driving at," I said. "You prefer to marry Muri Simuna, do you?"

"Oh yes, and we arranged long ago to get married."

"Then why don't you get married?" I asked.

"Oh, because he hasn't got any money to pay for me."

This was a specimen of conversations which got more and more frequent after I had unwisely intervened and supplied the funds necessary to enable the couple to be happily united. I became the fairy godmother of all lovers who found themselves in difficulties.

Not infrequent, too, were the visits of fathers who came to complain that their daughters refused to marry the chosen husband. As I knew that it was useless in Africa, as in all other countries, to reason with people who are in love, I thought it simpler to argue with the old man and get him to allow the preferred suitor to receive the hand of the girl.

Love affairs are carried on as a rule in the

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greatest (apparent) secrecy, but everyone knows what is going on. Even if you go into a strange village where not a soul has ever seen you before, it is not difficult to pick out the girls who have a love affair on hand; they are oiled and painted and carry all the family jewellery round their necks; red beads have been imported in great quantities, and girls, to make themselves beautiful, wear several pounds weight round their necks. Not only so, but the love-sick maidens are unmercifully teased by their fellows; you see a knot of girls standing talking, and all of a sudden they begin to laugh, the loved one excepted, and all run off.

As for the men, of course the Bambala are not the only people who are ready to do rash things when they are in love. It sometimes happened that a man came to ask me how long he would have to work in order to earn a certain amount of money, *i.e.* about £5. When I said it would take a good long time, and inquired what he wanted to do with all that money, he said it was the bride price. If I advanced the money, as I sometimes did, the debt was always worked off. It not infrequently happens that a man, in order to secure his bride as soon as possible, will give himself as a pledge for the money advanced to a wealthy man, and thus practically put himself in the position of a slave—a great proof of devotion and self-sacrifice.

As a rule the husband of an adulterous woman repudiates her, and men have come to me and sworn to kill the erring wife as soon as she returned; and

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then when she came back, instead of carrying out their threats, they have just gone up to her, taken her by the hand, begged her not to offend again, and taken her to their bosoms; and this they have done not only once, but many times.

The Bambala are exceedingly fond of their children; to do me honour they called a large proportion of the boys born while I was there by my native name. I sincerely trust that no ethnologist or traveller will find it necessary to speak of a tribe designated by the name of the Badeke.

I received daily visits from proud mothers who came to tell me that the first tooth was through, which I was obliged to verify by manual examination, or that the first word had been spoken, which was repeated sometimes for my edification by the child; boys brought me the first rat which they had killed; little girls frequently came to tell me with great pride that on that day they had gone for the first time to help their mothers in the fields. I trust my readers will not be shocked when I mention that I got engaged to more than a dozen of them; but if, when I return, I find that they have got tired of waiting for the lover who wooed and rode away, I will not be too hard on them, though by native law I alone am entitled to release them from their engagement.

It was about this time that I received a phonograph from Europe. I advise any of my readers who is planning a trip among primitive peoples on no account to omit to take one of these instruments.

A SORROWFUL PARTING

As a rule, when work was at an end in the evening, people came to me and asked whether I would not give them a tune on my speaking *kissi*; when the music began they were turned into statues, neither moving nor speaking, thus setting a good example to concert-goers in Europe; as for the idea of going home to supper at the ordinary time, it never entered their heads; they took their music fasting. Of course I was often called upon to open the instrument, and when they had duly ascertained that there was no human being within, they were loud in their praises of Deke, who had made such a remarkable discovery. I trust Mr. Edison will excuse my appropriation of his laurels.

I made several short journeys from Kikwit, but they had none of them any striking features which merit description. In the early part of 1907 news reached me from Europe which compelled me to hasten my return, which should have taken place a year later. The tidings spread rapidly, though they were at first not credited, but when I told them that it was perfectly true that I was going, deputation after deputation came from the native villages to beg me to prolong my stay. The chiefs remonstrated with me and asked how they had displeased me, and whether they had not always shown themselves friendly and loyal, as indeed they had. But I explained to them that my presence was absolutely necessary in my own village, but I was naturally highly gratified to see how much they regretted my departure.

“GOOD-BYE, BAMBALA ”

On the day on which I was to leave, the steamer *Marie* was lying at the quay, and about five in the morning I heard a considerable stir; it was the people of the surrounding villages who had come to see me off. When my luggage was put on board everyone fought for the privilege of rendering me this last service. Then the leave-taking took place; I had to shake hundreds of black hands, pat children on the head, and give a solemn promise to return as soon as possible.

I went on board and looked from the bridge down upon the huge crowd, among whom were none who were not my friends. A curious mixture of feelings came over me. I was very unhappy at the thought of leaving Kikwit, and, on the other hand, I could not but feel proud to see the regret at my departure. While preparations were being made for pushing off a man cried out, “Let us sing Deke’s favourite song,” and the whole assembly broke out into voice; the steamer whistled thrice, the captain rang the engine-room telegraph, and off we went. And there stood my dear old black friends, waving their hands, cloth, branches, anything that came to hand, and shouting, “Deke moyo, Kusimbana betu lo!” (“Good-bye, Deke, don’t forget us”). “Bambala, moyo!” (“Good-bye, Bambala”).

CHAPTER XVII

Folklore and its importance—How the first people got married—The origin of light—Why the gorilla does not speak—Why the dead are buried—How disease and death came to man.

HAVING told what I had to say about the natives, I shall now give them a chance of speaking for themselves. I regret not to be able to give an exact account of what they think of the white man; let the reader be however assured that they do *not* consider him quite so great or so superior a being as the casual traveller may be led to believe when he is the subject of occasional flatteries. I doubt not, the negroes admit that certain white men possess qualities of which he is deficient, and as long as he is not undeceived he believes that the European is more prone to tell the truth than the African; on the other hand, he is perfectly aware that there are qualities which are better developed in himself than in the “pale stranger.”

To judge of the moral ideas of primitive peoples there is no better means than to study their stories. As we like our hero to marry the princess, or as

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we rejoice in seeing Tom Thumb kill the giant, thus showing that we desire that valour should be recompensed and that brains should conquer brute force, so the negro puts into his stories a hero who corresponds to his ideal and lets him have a career he desires for himself.

It is this idea that induces me to finish this book with some of the stories old Congo people tell to the young folk so as to impress them with what is right and what is wrong.

As far as possible I shall give an exact account of tales I overheard when I was a concealed witness of their talk round the camp fire. The translation is by no means word for word, for this would be incomprehensible to the European; it is more strictly speaking a translation, sentence for sentence. I have tried to give the exact meaning of the stories, suppressing only such passages as might give offence to Mrs. Grundy. It is with a view to these respectable ladies' opinions that the selection has to be a short one, for my black friends like to call a spade a spade, and consequently many of the stories can only find place in books of a strictly scientific character.

THE FIRST MARRIAGE

HOW THE FIRST PEOPLE GOT MARRIED

(BATETELA STORY)

WHEN Winya, the Sun-God, had created the world, he made men and women; the men he put into one village, the women into another. And neither village had any knowledge of the existence of the other.

The men were hunters. Each man went out in the morning in pursuit of game; if he was successful, he had dinner; if not, he had none. And on days of ill luck a man would complain. "If only I had some one to help me to hunt, I would never have to go to bed with an empty stomach." At that time the dog was a wild animal and lived in the bush with the jackal, his brother. One day they had experienced very bad luck in hunting, having caught nothing though they had worked hard all day. At last night fell, and, as they had eaten no food, they were soon shivering with the cold.

"Bulu" (jackal), said the dog.

"Yes," answered the jackal.

"Man has a village near this place?"

"True," replied the jackal.

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"There is a big fire burning in his hut?"

"Yes."

"Fire is nice and warm."

"Yes."

"There may be some nice bones lying near the fire."

"Yes."

"Why don't you go and fetch the fire and the bones?"

"Not I," said the jackal. "He who giveth good advice ought to be the first to follow it; go, fetch them yourself."

"I am afraid," said the dog, and lay down and tried to sleep. But the cold increased, and their teeth began to chatter. Now the dog had less fur than the jackal, and consequently he felt the cold more keenly; at last he exclaimed:

"I will go and fetch the fire; you stay here, and, if I should stay too long, you call for me."

"Very well," said the jackal, and the dog trotted off.

When he arrived at the village the fowls raised an outcry, and the man came out of his house; seeing the dog he took his spear, and was about to kill him, but the dog cried:

"Do not kill me, I am a poor starving beast, half dead with cold; let me warm myself by the fire, and then I will go back to the bush."

"Be it so," said the man. "Warm yourself, but when you are warm, tutsh, you go back to your bush."



WEAVER-BIRDS

In many villages of the Kwilu the palm trees are simply covered with nests of a species of black weaver-bird; the fledglings are at regular intervals removed by the natives; cooked in oil (without the intestines being removed) they are considered a great delicacy. It is the "Japodya" referred to in the story, "The origin of light."

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The dog crawled into the hut, lay down by the blazing fire, and began to gnaw a bone which the man had thrown away. Soon the man asked :

“Have you done?”

“Not yet,” said the dog, and continued to gnaw.

Some time passed, and again the man asked :

“Have you done?”

“Not yet,” again murmured the dog, and seized another bone.

And the fire was warm, and the bone was very sweet; the dog felt happier than he had ever felt before, and the idea of going out into the cold bush made him shiver. So when the man asked a third time, “Have you done?” he replied :

“Yes, but I wish you would allow me to remain with you; I will be useful to you, instead of robbing the roost like my brother the jackal; I will help you to hunt the bush-fowl; I will show you the tracks of the wild game; all I ask in return is a place by your fire and the remains of your meal.”

“So be it,” said the man, and the dog had remained in the village to this day.

When at night you hear a howl near the village—“Bo-ah, Bo-ah”—you may be sure that it is the jackal calling his lost brother, the dog, to return.

Thus the man had some one to help him in hunting, but still the chase was his only means of livelihood.

Now for the women’s village. The women would

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go out every morning to gather corn, roots, and vegetables ; for all the domesticated plants then grew wild. If a woman found some, she had dinner ; if not, she had to go without.

It happened one day that a woman, having ventured further afield than was her custom in her search for food, suddenly met a man, who also had gone further in his hunting expedition than he had ever been before.

Both were utterly astonished :

"What is this ?" the woman exclaimed.

"You are a funny animal," said the man ; "you speak just like a man."

"I am *not* an animal," said the woman ; "I am a woman."

"What have you been doing here ?" asked he.

"Gathering food."

"You don't seem to have found much of it," he sneered.

"Not much ! And what is this ?" replied the woman, showing proudly a bunch of millet.

"Surely that is not *food* ! Why, woman, this is food," said he, showing an antelope he had just killed.

"You don't say you eat *that* ?" said the astonished woman.

"But what else could I eat ?"

"Well, this." The woman thrust the bunch of millet in his face.

"I am not an antelope to eat grass !" the man said.

THE FIRST MARRIAGE

“You are not a leopard to eat flesh,” the woman retorted.

“But flesh is food !”

“No, millet is food !”

And thus they quarrelled. The woman, of course, lost her temper, and, finally, she wept with anger. So the man said :

“There is no use in quarrelling like this ; give me some of your food and I will try how it tastes ; then I will give you some of my food, and you shall try that ; then we will see who is right.”

So they sat down and separately cooked their respective foods. When they tried each other's food they found that bread and meat made a splendid mixture, and then and there they decided to live together for the future.

Time passed. A little bird called Gininde soon taught the woman how to plant millet instead of simply relying on the chance of finding it. One day a baby was born. How proud the mother was ! She had never visited the women's village since she had thrown in her lot with her husband ; but now she rushed off to show all her friends the beautiful baby. And then all women wanted to have babies too ; so, with the help of her husband, the news was carried to the men's village, and each man came and took a woman as his wife.

Since, then, people have taken to marrying and having babies, just as they do up to this day.

And when Winya, the Sun-God, saw how the people multiplied, he thought : “These people are

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getting so great in number that they will be tempted one day to overpower me and bind me, then they might make me do whatever they like."

So he left earth and went up to heaven ; and he makes nice people die, so that their souls may come to him and keep him company.

THE ORIGIN OF LIGHT

ONCE upon a time a King of the Bushongo country named Woto, having been insulted by the sons of his brother, Moelo, left the country in anger, cursing those he left behind him.

When he left Moelo's village there was no sun ; it did not exist. Moelo was much troubled by the darkness ; he complained that if he took a wife, he could not see whether she was pretty or not ; if he plucked fruit, he could not see whether it were ripe or unripe ; if a man approached him, he could not tell whether he were friend or foe. So he called three of his men, and spoke to them as follows : " Why did I allow Woto to leave this village ? He is so clever that he would have surely found some remedy for this darkness. Go forth and find him ; ask him to forget the wrongs my son has done him, and to give us some means whereby we may see. But in order that your mission may be successful it is imperative that you should not quarrel by the way, nor pause on your journey to fish.

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Take care, therefore, that you do not fall out nor loiter to fish in the streams." So the three men named Kalonda, Buimbi, and Binga set out in quest of Woto. They went on and on until they came to a big river, and there Binga said, "Let us rest awhile and fish." "Nay," said the others, "do you not remember Moelo's words?" But Binga would not listen to them; he called them evil names, and, despite their protests, began to fish. So Kalonda and Buimbi saw that it was useless to continue their journey, and returned to Moelo. When they arrived Moelo asked them, "Have you brought the light?" "No," they replied; "Binga has disobeyed your orders; he has quarrelled with us, and he has stopped by the way to fish; so it was useless for us to continue, and we returned." Moelo therefore beat Binga, and said, "You shall go no more with the others;" then, turning to Kalonda and Buimbi, he said, "Go forth once more in search of Woto, and instead of Binga take my dog with you." So they took the road again, this time with Moelo's dog. When they reached the river they built a boat and commenced to float down the stream, until they reached a place where the river was bordered by high rocks. "What shall we do?" they said; "these high rocks prevent us from landing anywhere." Kalonda suggested, "Let the dog search; where the wisdom of man ends, there the wisdom of the animal begins." And surely enough the dog found a very narrow path among the rocks, along which the men followed him. So they came to the

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abode of Woto. "What would you," said Woto, "you men of Moelo? You have driven me from my home; can you not leave me in peace in my new refuge, where I came to hide my shame?" They replied, "Your brother Moelo is very unhappy. He complains that when he takes a new wife the darkness prevents him from seeing whether she is pretty or no; when he plucks fruit he cannot see whether it is ripe or unripe; if a man approaches him he cannot tell whether he be friend or foe. He begs you to remember that you and he are children of the same mother, and to help him in his misery." Woto said, "Go and sleep." The next day he called them to him and gave them three birds, a Mokuku (Natal cuckoo), a Koko (a fowl), and a Japodya (a small black bird which nests in great numbers in the trees near villages). "Take these birds to my brother," he said; "when you reach his village let them loose, and go to sleep. When you hear the Mokuku say 'Kooo-Koo-Koo-Koo,' do not move; soon you will hear the cock call 'Katariko,'—do not move; but when you hear the Japodya cry 'Zwa, Zwa, Zwa, Zwa,' then open your huts and see!" So they took the birds and returned to Moelo, who did as Woto had enjoined. Next morning the cuckoo called "Kooo-Koo-Koo-Koo," and no one moved; slowly the night gave place to a greyish dawn, then they heard the cock cry "Katariko"; still no one moved; the sky took a reddish hue, and here and there things became dimly visible; then the Japodya sang "Zwa, Zwa, Zwa, Zwa,"

THE GORILLA DOES NOT SPEAK

and they opened their hut doors, and there blazed the beautiful sunlight.

If a man quarrels with another in the village, the elders summon him and order him to pay a fine; if he neglects to do so and quarrels with another, they summon him again, and say, "You quarrelled with So-and-so—you have killed the Mokuku; now you have quarrelled with another man—you have killed the fowl; take heed that you quarrel no more, for we will not have the Japodya killed, and so live in darkness on your account!"

WHY THE GORILLA DOES NOT SPEAK

IN the land of the Sungu there is a river called the *Lubefu*; this word means the storm-wind, and the stream well deserves its name; for, instead of flowing quietly between its banks, as any respectable river would, it forms a string of falls and cascades, jumping from rock to rock like a giddy goat; and the stream is so violent that no boat can float on it. It runs through an impenetrable forest where live a great number of *Soko Muntu* (gorillas), that is to say, men of the woods. They are huge apes, brave and strong and just like men; in times gone by they were often heard to speak, and I am going to tell you why they no longer do so.

Years ago, but not too far back for old people to

THE GORILLA DOES NOT SPEAK

remember their grandfathers speaking of them, there lived a couple near the *Lubefu*, a man named *Gika* and his wife *Sudila*. They had no children, and this filled their hearts with sorrow, for can there be greater misfortune for married people than to be childless? So one day *Gika* said to his wife, "It is now many years, *Sudila*, since you became my wife, and a kind, good wife you have been to me. But our happiness has not been crowned by the birth either of son or daughter. Why is this? God alone knows. We are getting old, and when weakness and poverty overtake us there will be nobody to comfort us in our old age, and after a miserable lonely death no one will shed tears over our neglected graves." *Sudila* wept bitterly. Touched by her grief, her husband said: "But there is a remedy. The weekly market of *Mokunji* will be held to-morrow; let us go there and buy a slave child and adopt it as our own. So cry no more. By kindness we will win this child's affection, and it will soon respect and love us as if we were its real parents."

All that night long *Sudila* dreamt of a loving child, and a sweet dream it was. The next morning they started on their errand—the husband with his shield and spear, the woman with her goods to sell and a number of copper crosses to pay for the child. While walking they discussed their plans, how they would buy a nice strong boy, and how *Gika* would teach him to hunt and fish and fight, so that he might grow up a warrior bold. And *Sudila* talked about the nice dishes she would cook for him and how he should

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wear clothes, fine and clean enough for any chieftain's son.

As they proceeded and approached the town Sudila suddenly stopped; "Gika," she said, "what is that noise I hear?" So Gika also paused and listened. He was a keen hunter, who, when on the track of game, could hear as well as the shyest beast of the forest the cracking of a branch, the rustling of a leaf. He at once found out what the matter was. "It is a child crying as if in distress," he said, and turned round to continue his way, when his wife exclaimed, "A child in distress! I must go and help." And without waiting for a reply she threw her chattels on the ground and flew off in the direction of the sound. And there she saw a pitiable sight. An ugly looking woman was beating a child aged about three with a big stick, whilst her laughing husband stood by. Sudila never said a word, but just flew at the nasty hag, and, like an infuriated cat, began scratching her face and tearing her hair. She would have fared ill, for the strange man at once took his spear in order to defend his wife, had not Gika arrived on the spot and held him at bay. The two men then separated the women, and Sudila, still panting, asked in a hoarse voice: "Why did you . . . why did you . . . beat this babe?" "Is she not my slave? Can I not beat her whenever I like?" was the answer. "And am I not a woman to stand up for any innocent child?" screamed Sudila. "And am I not going to tear your evil eyes out of your ugly old head, you wicked old witch?" And Sudila would have been as

THE GORILLA DOES NOT SPEAK

good as her word had not her husband interfered. He turned to the strange man and said: "Since when has it been the custom of this land that children, free or slaves, should be ill-treated? Have we not foes enough to fight? Are there no man-eating leopards to kill and enemies to slay that you should need to display your prowess on babies lately weaned? If you do not tell me why you beat this child, verily I will pierce you with my spear, you and that ill-favoured wife of yours, as true as my name is Gika and I am the son of Saadi."

Now Gika was a warrior of great fame and a big and powerful man, so the stranger was frightened and said: "My wife gave her load to this slave to carry, and the girl refused to do so." "Shame on you," said good Gika indignantly; "this child is so tiny that it ought to be carried, and not carry the loads of big brutes like you and your wife!" The man replied with a sneer: "But is she not my slave?" A sudden thought came to Gika. "I will buy your slave," he said; "what do you ask for her?" The stranger, perceiving his eagerness, said, "I will accept all the goods your wife carries as a favour from *you*, because you are such a nice-spoken gentleman." This was great impudence, for this was more than twice the fair price, but Gika, without another word, paid the man. Then he asked: "What is the girl's name?" "Oh, we never troubled to give her one; we simply call her *Fumbe* (slave)." Then Sudila, with a grateful look at her husband which amply repaid him for his kindness, snatched up the sobbing child, and,

THE GORILLA DOES NOT SPEAK

hugging and kissing her, said : “ You poor little mite, you shall have a mother *now* and a name too. In remembrance of your time of misery you shall be called *Tamakumina* (she whom nobody loved), but you shall be beloved by me as if you were a real child of mine, given to me by God.” And she wept over the baby sweet tears of motherhood, and felt a happier and prouder woman than she had ever felt before.

Although they had set out with the intention of adopting a strong boy, they did not regret that their kindness of heart had caused them to buy a weakly girl instead ; and they were soon rewarded for their charity, for under Sudila’s motherly care the child prospered and became the finest, brightest, and most loving little lassie in the country. She could not have loved her own mother more than she loved Sudila, and wherever this good lady went little Tamakumina would trot gaily behind her. Every evening before sunset they went together to the Lubefu River, and while Sudila washed and filled her pots with water, the child played amongst the flowers on the bank. It happened one day that a nasty scorpion crawled up to her ; of course the child screamed with horror. A gorilla, who had watched the mother and her child for several days, at once came down from his tree, crushed the vermin, and took the child in his arms. Little Tamakumina, seeing the animal’s eyes beam with kindness, knew she had nought to fear, so she laughed and clapped her hands and began playing with the gorilla’s whiskers. The gorilla was so pleased that he did not see Sudila,

THE GORILLA DOES NOT SPEAK

who, alarmed by the child's cry, had returned in haste from the water. At the sight of the gorilla she was frightened and gave a little scream, but the animal turned round and said : " I intended no harm to your babe ; it has been frightened, and I only wanted to soothe it. If you will promise me not to tell your husband, I will come every day and look after your child while you are doing your work at the river." Sudila gladly gave the promise, and so it happened that the gorilla looked after the child every day and kept it out of harm's way while the mother attended to her work.

But soon the secret began to weigh on Sudila's mind ; she was too good a woman to break her pledged word, but she passed many a restless night, and once Gika overheard her saying in her sleep : " What would my good husband say if he knew what happens when I go to the river ! " Gika was puzzled, and when his wife went next day to fetch water he followed her at a distance. He saw her put the little girl on the ground, and noticed that the child looked round as if expecting some one. Then there was a cracking in the branches, and the gorilla appeared. Gika, thinking the child was in danger, whirled the spear at the animal just as it bent down to pick up the child. But he missed his aim, and the spear hit Tamakumina, piercing her little heart. The gorilla exclaimed : " Man, man, what have you done ? You have killed your child while intending to hurt me, who have never done you any harm. I do not hurt men, I do not rob your crops ; why did you want to kill me ? Am I not

WHY THE DEAD ARE BURIED

a man? Am I not a fellow-creature? Your cruelty bears its own punishment; there is your child lying dead at your feet. And as I see that men are so unjust and cruel, I will never again speak in their hearing." And with a distressing howl he disappeared in the thicket.

Poor Gika and Sudila could not bear their sorrow; they soon followed their beloved Tamakumina to the grave.

No gorilla has ever since been known to speak in the presence of man. When one sees a child alone he will pick it up, admire and caress it, but at the approach of a grown-up he disappears in haste.

WHY THE DEAD ARE BURIED

IN times long gone by people did not bury their dead; the bodies of the deceased were thrown away into the bush and left there to decay, or to be destroyed by wild beasts. There lived then a chief called Fumu Bwambu, who had an only son whom he cherished more than any of his riches. The son, Masolo by name, was not only beloved by his father, but he was the pride of his whole tribe; friendly to the young people of his own age, respectful to the aged, and helpful to the weak. He was the idol of his tribesmen. They said of him: "Masolo is as good as an infant in its mother's arms." And who can be

WHY THE DEAD ARE BURIED

better than the infant in its innocence? He was strong and active; a famous hunter and a great warrior in the battle-field. The enemies of his tribe said of him: "Masolo is as brave as the mother-leopard defending her cubs." And who can be more terrible than the she-leopard when her fury is roused?

Fumu Bwambu was the chief of Misumba, a great town on the right bank of the Lubudi River, about two miles distant from the water. One day the women were working in the fields, when suddenly a huge elephant swam across the Lubudi and approached them. Trampling down the Indian corn he showed signs of great fury, and drove the deadly frightened women back to the village. Shrieking and yelling they arrived there, and urged the young men on to scare the monster away. This they tried to do by beating gongs, blowing horns, and by shouting till they were hoarse; all this did not avail, however, but only made the elephant fiercer, and he rushed about destroying the entire crop.

Masolo, meanwhile, armed only with his spear, had been out hunting. When he heard the noise in the town he thought it had been attacked by some enemy, and hastened home to the rescue. When they saw him the women exclaimed: "We are saved, we are saved! Here is our hero, here is Masolo!" Masolo at once rushed down to the fields, forgetting in his haste to take a second spear with him. When the elephant saw him he gave a horrible yell, and then charged him. Steadying himself Masolo waited

WHY THE DEAD ARE BURIED

till the elephant was only a few paces distant; and then, with tremendous power, hurled the spear at him. His aim was true, and the spear entered the monster's body up to the shaft. But the wound was not mortal, and only made the elephant mad with pain. His trunk in the air, his ears wide apart from his body, and shrieking with rage, he charged Masolo. Having no arms left, the hunter tried to escape; but he slipped in the wet grass, and the next moment his enemy was on him. He gored him with his tusks, and then, taking him up in his trunk, carried him across the Lubudi and disappeared. The other warriors, paralysed with terror, dared do nothing to rescue him.

The next day some men from the other bank of the Lubudi brought back Masolo's body; after having trampled on him, the elephant had left it near the road, and there they had found it. The whole country bewailed him, and it was a pitiful sight to see Fumu Bwambu in his grief. The despairing father walked to and fro, speechless, tearless, his eyes fixed on the ground. As he walked his notice was attracted by a Dondonji burying its prey. (The Dondonji is the *Bembex rostrata* of this country.) "What," he exclaimed, "here is a small foolish insect which thinks that it is its duty to hide carefully what is dead; yet we men, who are so much wiser and greater, cast away the bodies of those whom we love like so much dirt! This shall be no longer; we will follow the example of the wise Dondonji, and bury the remains of our deceased relations, and my son shall be the

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first to receive fitting treatment at the hands of those who loved him."

And so it was done. Masolo was buried with great ceremony, amid the lamentations of the whole tribe, and since that day all men bury their dead.

HOW DISEASE AND DEATH CAME TO MAN

THERE was a time when death was unknown, even disease had not made its appearance; people always felt well, and lived on for ever.

Now it happened that a child was born who had a deformed tongue. The old and wise people of the tribe consulted together about this child, and one of them said: "Why is the tongue of this child different from that of other people; this certainly bodes no good for its future. Let us expose it so that some wild beast may devour it, and thus save us from the evil that this child will bring on us." The mother of the child protested: "I will not let my child be exposed," she said; "is not my child as good as the child of any other woman?" But the mother's entreaties did not soften the old men's hearts; the only thing they would promise was that, if the child survived ten days' exposure, the mother would be permitted to bring it back to the village.

So they took the child, whose name was Mitete, and carried it to a distant part of the forest. They

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deposited it near a brook where the leopards were wont to come to drink; but when they returned to the place ten days later they found the little boy well and hearty, and he seemed none the worse for having been there alone and unfed, for the leopards had run away at the sight of him.

They brought him back to the village, and said: "We have promised the mother of this child not to expose it again; but as we cannot allow the whole tribe to suffer to please a single woman, let us consult about means of getting rid of this child of evil omen."

After much discussion, it was decided that the child should be buried alive. They satisfied the mother by promising her that should the child be still alive after twenty days they would give her permission to bring it back again. So they dug a deep, deep hole, put the child into it, and then covered it up with earth. But when after twenty days they unearthed it, hoping to find it dead, they found it alive and happy, showing its deformed tongue to the horrified elders.

The elders thought, after this, that it was all the more necessary to destroy Mitete, and, as a last means, they tried to drown him. They promised the mother, however, that should they fail this time they would give up any further attempts. So they took a big stone, bound it round the child's neck, and threw him into the river where it was deepest. A few days later a fisherman found the child alive in his net, and after this the elders gave up all hope of getting rid of him.

DISEASE AND DEATH

Mitete grew up and became very clever ; but, as the wise old men had foreseen, he also became very malicious. He knew all the hidden powers that are in the herbs, and magic had no secrets from him. As he wanted to use this knowledge to his advantage so as to increase his influence in the council and his riches, he invented disease and death—disease so as to 'oblige people to come to him for remedies, and death so that the fear of it might make people all the more willing to pay him whatever he demanded. And he would go by night to the forest and there associate with ghosts called Luphu, who are souls that have no abode, and through their agency he would spread epidemics and all sorts of other evils.

Soon the whole tribe was terrorised, and the king and his subjects determined to flee the country, abandoning the evil Mitete. Very early one morning, when Mitete was still asleep, they set out secretly and hurried off in the direction of the South.

But Mitete discovered the trick, and soon overtook them. Then he said : " You are men, and I am a man, why do you wish to abandon me ? When I was a helpless child you did all you could to destroy me and you failed ; now I am a man, and can hold my own against all of you ; do you think you will be more successful ? "

They replied : " You have brought disease and death to us ; you, you evil-tongued one, we will not allow you to follow us." And then they all as one man went for him ; they hit him with sticks ; they struck him with knives ; they stabbed him with

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spears ; but all this was of no avail, for so strong was his magic that they were powerless to hurt him.

Thus it was that disease and death came to them in their new home, and ever since wise parents will destroy any child that is born with a deformity.

CHAPTER XVIII

How the making of fire was invented—What the dog has discovered—
Fleeing the rich—The story of the first suicide—A story relating how
people learned to drink from brooks and rivers—The squirrel's clearing
—Bringing home the pipe of peace—The chief's revenge.

HOW THE MAKING OF FIRE WAS INVENTED

ONCE upon a time there lived a great king. This king held sway over many peoples—the Beans-people, the Bell-people, the people called the Repairers, the Mole-people, the people called the Planters, and many others which would take too much of my time to name. This king's name was Muchu Mushanga.

When a great king such as he has expressed a wish it was, of course, at once gratified. It was quite enough for him to say: "I should be pleased to have a chicken for my breakfast," or "It would give me pleasure to possess a beautiful ivory horn with men, and beast, and plants, and all sorts of things carved on it," and everybody would run at once to fetch what the king wanted.

One day the king was sitting with his councillors in solemn Court of Justice trying a villain who had stolen his neighbour's dog, when in rushed his queen, and, throwing herself at his feet, exclaimed: "My royal master and husband, I cannot cook thy royal dinner, for I do not possess any fire! If thou wouldst

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not go to bed with an empty stomach order thy subjects to give me some."

Now, if the king had a weakness it was that he *was* rather fond of his food ; so, inflicting hurriedly severe penalties on both the accused and the accuser (thus making sure that the guilty party did not escape), he dismissed the council, and, calling the town-crier, he ordered him to signify to the inhabitants of the royal capital that the king desired to be supplied with some fire at once.

The town-crier soon came back. With trembling lips he told the king how he had failed on his errand. There had been a dance in the town the day before ; all the women had been present, and, while enjoying themselves, had neglected their domestic duties, so that all the fires had gone out. " And now we can't have any fire till there is a thunderstorm ; if we are lucky, the lightning *may* fall on a tree, and *may* light it, and then, O king, we will provide thee with fire." Great was the king's distress and great was the distress of his subjects.

There lived in the town at this period a man named Kerikeri. Some time before the event I am relating to you took place, he had dreamed that Bumba, the divine ancestor of his people, had visited him and told him to go to a certain spot on a certain road, to break twigs from a certain tree, and to preserve them carefully. This he had done, and when the twigs had become very dry Bumba appeared again in a dream, praised him for his obedience, and taught him how to obtain fire by

THE MAKING OF FIRE

friction. He showed him how to take one stick and how to twirl it, pressing its blunt point against another stick which was lying on the ground; he showed him how to shift his hands up again when they got too far down, and he showed him how, if he turned the stick fast enough and pressed strong enough, a hole was produced in the twig lying on the ground, and how the charred dust would take fire after a time.

Kerikeri kept his secret; but when by some accident or by the housewives' negligence, as had happened now, all the fires in the village had gone out, he would sell fire at a high price to his neighbours. All the people, foolish and clever, tried to discover his secret; but he guarded it carefully.

When he heard of the king's request for fire, he at once made up his mind not to let him have any. "If I confess to the king my power to make fire, he thought, he will order me to tell him my secret, and the nice profit I make out of selling fire will disappear." So he told the town-crier that the people who had informed him that Kerikeri could make fire at will had lied. "Am I wizard," he cried out, "that I could do what is in no man's power? Why not ask me to make rain, or sunshine? Some enemies of mine bent on my destruction have invented this story, so that the king should decide to have me killed."

King Muchu Mushanga had a very lovely daughter named Katenge. Her skin was beautifully brown and as smooth as the ivory that had been kept in



A PARASITE

Many of the vines of the forest are parasitic, and slowly, but inevitably, kill their host.

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the royal treasury for hundreds of years; her face was as pleasant to look at as the full moon; her eyes shone like stars on a moonless night; when she opened her mouth for a smile, you had to shade your eyes, such was the glittering of her teeth; when she opened her mouth for a laugh, it sounded like the song of the plantain eater when he calls in love for his mate; when she opened her mouth to speak, wisdom poured forth like water from a spring. She was as sweet as honey, and as good as an infant in its mother's arms.

The king was much grieved not to be able to get any fire. He had to sleep in the cold, and had to eat uncooked food; but, worst of all, he felt the humiliation that he, who was ruler of so many people, should be at the mercy of such a humble man as Kerikeri. So he fell ill, and all the herbs that wise men and old women brought him could not cure him. Katenge saw her beloved father pining away, so she went to him and said: "Dear father, don't give way to despair. Where a powerful king fails a pretty and clever woman may succeed. I shall try to find out Kerikeri's secret so that your heart may be at peace again." Muchu Mushanga moaned. "If I live to see you do so I shall make you the greatest woman of my kingdom; you shall be honoured and sit amongst the elders like a man, and I shall make your name revered by future generations."

When Katenge left the king she walked homewards in deep thought. How could she help her father? Suddenly she saw at the other end of the

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street Kerikeri coming in her direction. When he came near her, he, as it became a low person, knelt down on the side of the way to let the princess pass. But she stopped, and, smiling her most winning smile, said: "Sweet youth, it pains me to see you humble yourself before me; princess as I am, I should like to lift you up with my own hands. But I may not, for should my father hear of it he most certainly would kill me. Alas, Kerikeri does not care for poor Katenge; would he not otherwise ask her to meet him in secret at night, when no one is by who could tell tales to her father?"

Kerikeri felt a shock at his heart; he tried to speak, stammered, jumped up, and then ran away like mad. Katenge thus saw that she had succeeded in capturing his love; and full of hope she returned to her hut. Soon after this she noticed Kerikeri's best friend prowling about near her home, so she sent her confidential slave-girl to ask him whether he bore any message from Kerikeri. The messenger told her that his friend was dying with love for her mistress, and that if Katenge would come that very evening to his hut, she would be sure to find him alone waiting for her.

When everyone in the village was asleep, she stole out, went to Kerikeri's hut and knocked at the door. It was a very dark night. Kerikeri admitted her, and she sat down on a mat and remained silent.

"Why art thou so silent, beloved?" asked Kerikeri; "dost thou not love me any more? Let me hear thy sweet voice; tell me that thou lovest

THE MAKING OF FIRE

me. Oh tell me that there is hope that I may call you my own ! ”

But Katenge replied : “ How can I think of love when I am freezing in your house ? Go and fetch fire, that I may behold thee, O sweet one, and my heart may become warm. ”

In vain did Kerikeri implore the princess to remember that no fire could be found in the village ; in vain did he request her to break silence ; she would only reply like an obstinate child : “ I want a fire ! ” At last he fetched his fire-sticks and kindled a fire whilst the princess watched attentively. When she saw the flame blaze up brightly, she jumped up, clapped her hands with joy, and exclaimed : “ Did you think, you conceited fool, that I, a king’s daughter, loved you ? It is your secret that I wanted, so as to save my father’s life ; now that I know how to make fire, *you* may marry a slave-girl to keep it alight for you. ”

The king, when his daughter brought him the good news, at once recovered. And he kept his promise to her, for even to-day, amongst the highest councillors, there always is a woman, who is great amongst the great. In time of peace she wears a bow-string as an ornament round her neck ; but if the country is in peril she removes it and hands it to the commander of the army, who then sallies forth and destroys the enemy. And this woman, so great and powerful, still bears the title—Katenge.

WHAT THE DOG HAS DISCOVERED

WHAT THE DOG HAS DISCOVERED

“Don’t kick that dog! If he asks you for a morsel of your supper, give it to him, for what would your meals be if the dog had not taught man how to make oil to fry them in and how to obtain salt to spice them?”

“Of course you did not know, but what *do* children know? Well, it is lucky that we old people are as wise as children are silly; we may at any rate teach them. Little thanks we get for it! What do you say? You will give me a fowl to-morrow? Perhaps you may; perhaps you may change your mind. If you did bring that fowl at once you might learn how the dog did it. Well, I will take your knife as a guarantee. Wife, put this knife into the hut, and put some charms on it, so that the boy may not take it back by mistake. Of course he could only do it by mistake.”

Many, many years ago a hunter, after an unsuccessful chase, rested under a palm-tree, when a fruit fell off it on his nose. He picked the fruit up angrily and threw it away. His dog imagined that it had been thrown for him to play with, so he ran after it, and having retrieved it began to gnaw it. The hunter laughed at the dog’s mistake; but his attention was aroused when he found that the dog, after having gnawed off all the outer surface, began to sniff around for more, and as soon as he found another, began to eat it with evident delight. The man

WHAT THE DOG HAS DISCOVERED

thought: "What cannot harm a dog cannot harm me"; so he, too, began to pick up palm-cherries, and found their outer cover very palatable. This was hard luck on the dog; for now the man wanted all the palm-cherries for himself and left none for his dog.

The dog is a clever animal and *does* reason. When you see him lie there in the sun, his eyes twinkling, he thinks. Of what? Who knows? Well, the hunter's dog reasoned like this: "Man eats the meat and leaves the bones for me; man has eaten the palm-cherry. I will see what I can do with the *bone* of that!" So he took the palm-cherry stone the hunter had thrown away, cracked it, and lo! found the kernel soft and sweet. But soon the man, who observed him, found that out too, and now man eats or makes oil of both the palm-cherry and the kernel and leaves none for the dog. But when your dog comes near you at meal times, with a hungry look, wagging his tail, remember that it was he who taught man how nice palm-oil is, and give him a tasty fat morsel as recompense.

Oh, you want to know about the salt, too?

A man, not the same as before, quite a different man, went one day a-hunting with his dog. He noticed on approaching a stream that the animal ate with relish some herbs that grew near the water. So he took some of these home, determined to try them himself. His hunting had been successful, and as the fresh-killed venison smoked upon the fire the man tasted the herbs, and, finding them unpalatable, threw them into the fire, where they were quickly reduced

WHAT THE DOG HAS DISCOVERED

to ashes. As the meat was boiling slowly, attended to by the hunter's wife, a piece of it fell from the pot into the ashes of the herbs. The man, angry with his wife for her careless arrangement of the meat in the pot which had led to the waste of this morsel, said to her : "There goes your portion !" and, snatching the fallen meat from the ashes, flung it to the dog. The latter ate it with delight. At the end of his dinner the man gave meat again to his dog, this time directly from the pot, and was astonished to observe that the animal carried the food to the ashes, dipped it carefully into those of the herb, and devoured it. His curiosity was aroused ; the man tried the same process and found that the ashes added relish to the meat, for the burnt plant was the very plant the negroes use for making salt. In this way was salt-making from the ashes of the aquatic herb invented.

Of course, at first, the water to be used for cooking was simply spiced by an addition of the ashes ; but one day a nagging woman had just put the ashes in her pot over the fire, when she began to argue some point with her husband ; before she had finished all water had evaporated and the pure crystalline salt was found in the bottom of the pot. Thus for once even nagging had been good for something, leading to a useful discovery.

FLEECING THE RICH

FLEECING THE RICH

ONCE there was a man (this happened so long ago that his name has been forgotten) who had a dog which he made his pet. When he took his meals the dog used to share them with him; when he turned into sleep half of his couch was at the dog's disposal. If he wanted to go out hunting and the dog seemed reluctant to stir, he gave up his sport and remained at home. His friends used to chaff him on his great love for the mangy beast. "Truly," they said, "if that dog were your own son you could not make more fuss with him." But the man did not mind their jokes, and continued to cherish his dog as much as before.

In the same village there lived a very poor man, who was so destitute of property that he never possessed enough to pay the price of a wife; in order to have his food cooked he was in the habit of fetching firewood for some woman who, in return, would give him a dinner. One day he was cutting wood, and while thus employed he pondered over his poverty. And he thought how nice it would be to be rich like some people he knew, and to have a nice wife, to have cattle and slaves, and sit smoking under a shed in the village, while they did his work. Thus his thought wandered away from his task, and he did not see the other man's pet dog come along. The dog was sniffing about, when suddenly, by a misdirected stroke, the absent-minded wood-cutter chopped its tail off.

FLEECING THE RICH

You ought to have heard that dog howl ! With the little stump that was left to him between his legs he flew back to his master's hut, squealing and wailing and marking his way with a trail of blood. His master, when he perceived his pet so mutilated, at once took his bow and arrows and, bent on revenge, followed up the track. Soon he met the poor man, and asked him what he meant by cutting his dog's tail off. The poor man replied : " I never intended to do any harm to your pet ; I was chopping wood, and during a moment of inattention the dog got his tail under my axe. If I could, I would compensate you ; but what can you expect from a poor fellow like me ! " So the dog's owner recommended him to be more careful in future and returned to the village to nurse the dog.

After this accident the dog developed a very bad temper and frequently used to snap at people. None dared beat him for fear of his owner, and the dog became worse and worse. One day a very rich man came to the village to pay a visit to one of his friends. While walking along, and just as he had passed the dog's master's hut, the dog flew out and bit him badly in the leg. To prevent the wound from becoming dangerous, he caught hold of the animal, and, pulling one single hair from its coat, applied it to the injured part. Out came at once the owner of the dog, armed with his bow and arrows, and asked him what he meant by plucking out his dog's hair. " Your dog has bitten me," said the rich man, " and you know well that if I did not apply a part of the animal that



CICATRICES AS TRIBAL MARKS

The cicatrification of a man shows usually to what tribe he belongs, and this is often a truer guide than language; for while language may undergo changes caused by a new environment, Congo peoples stick faithfully to their tribal mark. The concentric circles on the back are characteristic of the Mongo tribes.



CICATRICES AS ORNAMENTS

Cicatrification is the favourite form of ornament amongst many tribes; but few women can boast of such a work of art as this woman of the Manyema has on her back. It is difficult to imagine the pain she must have endured while deep cuts were being made on her back, which was followed by the still more painful process of retarding the healing of the wounds, so as to obtain the highly raised scars.

THE FIRST SUICIDE

caused it to the wound, it would become poisoned and I might die." "I don't mind about your dying, that is your own business. You have stolen a hair of my dog and I want compensation." The rich man waxed wroth. "How is it," he exclaimed, "that you claim compensation from me, who only took a single hair of your dog after he had injured me, while you never put in a claim against the man who cut off his tail without any provocation?" "Well, you see," replied the owner of the dog, "the other man was but a beggar, whereas you are rich."

From this has arisen a saying that has been made into a song—

"The sheep has nice curling horns,
The sheep has nice strong legs;
Let the chief seize hold of its leg,
And it will bleat,
But if a poor man seizes it
It will remain silent."

Nobody expects anything from a poor man, but on every occasion the rich must pay, pay, pay.

THE STORY OF THE FIRST SUICIDE

THERE was once a man called Badja, who went to the forest of Mungungu Mayonge with his son. They had been walking for many hours in search of game, but had been unsuccessful. So the father asked his son: "How is it that we can see no game to-day? Have you not sacrificed a fowl to the hunting fetish as I

THE FIRST SUICIDE

ordered you?" The son replied: "Yes, I have." Again the father asked: "Whence did you steal the fowl you sacrificed?" "I did not steal it," the son replied; "I received it as a present from my mother." "Oh, you wicked boy!" exclaimed Badja, "don't you know the hunting fetish will accept as sacrifice no animal obtained by honest means? Verily, I believe you insulted the fetish by your unsuitable gift, and that is the reason that all the game avoids us. Get out of my sight and let me see you no more."

So they separated. After Badja had been some time alone, he was very sorry for having treated his son so harshly, so hoping that he was still close by, he shouted for him to come back again. But the boy, who had seen his father in a bad temper, did not dare to return, fearing that he would give him a beating; so when turning round a corner in the thicket he suddenly beheld him, he tried to hide in the crevice of a hollow tree. Now, these hollow trees are frequently haunted by evil ghosts, and when the boy entered the crevice the ghost in the tree at once attacked him and killed him. Great was the father's grief when he saw the body of his son. "Woe is to me," he exclaimed, "my son has died through my fault! What shall I do? I wish I could be in his place and he in mine." So he sat over the body for many hours lamenting and tearing his clothes. At last, driven by the pangs of hunger, he had to leave it and returned to the village. As soon as he arrived there the villagers asked him: "You went to the forest with your son, and you have come back alone.

THE FIRST SUICIDE

Pray, tell us, where have you left him?" He replied, "Alas, he died in the forest of Mungungu Mayonge." "What," they rejoined, you let your son perish thus in the forest, and dare to show yourself again in the village? Verily, we believe you have murdered your own child, and have returned to boast of your misdeed. Go again, and at once to the forest of Mungungu Mayonge, and if you cannot bring back your son let us see your face no more."

So Badja went back to the forest, wandering about, not knowing where to go. Freezing in the cold night he dared not seek consolation in sleep, lest some wild animal might devour him, and soon hunger and thirst became unbearable. At last he exclaimed: "I can live in this misery no longer!" and taking a strong creeper he climbed up a high tree, tied one end to a branch, the other round his neck, and hurled himself into space. Thus he died; but to this day his ghost haunts the forest of Mungungu Mayonge; and no hunter dares to enter this forest by night lest the ghost of the suicide destroys him.

A STORY RELATING HOW PEOPLE LEARNED TO DRINK FROM BROOKS AND RIVERS

LONG ago—a hundred years ago? A thousand years ago? Who knows?—people did not know how to drink out of brooks and rivers, and when they were thirsty they would go to a swamp, pick certain plants and squeeze the juice into their mouth. At that time

LEARNING TO DRINK

there lived a man called Bonde Ilonga, who had a wife called Beleke Beleke. This good woman had a nasty temper ; she would never be satisfied, whatever her husband might do to please her. If he gave her some rare feathers that she might ornament herself for a dance, she would say : “ I don’t want these ugly feathers ; could you not bring me some shells ? ” If he gave her a pine-apple, she wanted bananas ; did he give her a bracelet, she was sure to have wanted a ring.

One day he went out hunting and killed an animal which he took back to his wife. Instead of thanking him for his present she said : “ What do you bring me this disgusting meat for ? I don’t want it ; take it away and get some of another kind. ” So the good-natured Bonda Ilonga took his bow, called his dog, and went back to the forest.

For a long time they walked through the forest in search of game, the dog in front, the man behind, until they came to a lake. Thirsty by his exertions, the dog sprang into the water and drank long and deep, the man regarding him with the greatest astonishment ; but his amazement was still greater when the animal suddenly fell dead. “ What good is it for me, ” thought he, “ to return to the village without my dog ? I shall be the laughing-stock of all the hunters. If I had not such a wicked wife my faithful dog would not have perished. But I won’t go back to her again ; I will drink water and perish also. ”

So he too drank deeply ; but instead of dying, as

LEARNING TO DRINK

he expected, he felt refreshed and fortified. "It won't act on me," he said sorrowfully, "but I will take some home to destroy that wicked wife of mine. My dog has died through her fault, let her die too." Then he filled up his cup with water and returned to the village. Going to his wife he said: "It is your fault that my dog drank this water and died; therefore you shall drink and perish likewise." The woman implored him not to kill her, and Bonde Ilonga, who was very kind and tender-hearted, at last said: "May this be a lesson to you; I will pardon you this time, but you must never show me a bad temper again."

"You pardon me?" the woman sneered; "I don't want your pardon! And won't you be sorry when I am dead," and out of sheer spite she drank the draught she believed to be deadly. When she had drained the cup she laughed, and said: "You silly man, this is not only nice but it is delicious; go and get me some more."

So Bonde Ilonga went daily to the pool in the forest to fetch water for his household. One day, when his wife again had one of her fits of bad temper, she said: "To-day I will come with you." Bonde, however, forbade her to do so; yet when he had started he saw that she was following him; and all his commands and entreaties were insufficient to persuade her to obey him. At last he had to give in, but he said: "You shall have your way and come with me; but I beseech you, don't go near the water, and on no account bathe in it."

When they arrived at the pool the woman at once

THE SQUIRREL'S CLEARING

jumped into the water and began to wash. Bonde Ilonga was very angry. "How dare you, you accursed woman, soil the water we drink? What shall we find to drink in future?" he said. She retorted: "Had you not forbidden me to bathe, I never should have thought of doing it, so it is all your fault. But never mind, you see these small shrubs around this pool; they shall grow and grow until they are big trees, and then they shall produce a drink far superior to this."

For once she told the truth, for the bushes began to grow until they became tall palm-trees, from which palm-wine could be obtained, and up to this day the Bangongo people believe that but for Beleke Beleke's bath in the pool, the palms would have remained shrubs and would never have grown into trees. For her disobedience to her husband, however, Beleke Beleke was compelled to fetch water by herself, and that is why women perform this duty to this day.

THE SQUIRREL'S CLEARING

ONE day in a village, the name of which I have forgotten, or maybe have never known, the men decided that they would go hunting. If a hunt is to be successful, as you know, it is important that a stolen fowl should be offered to the hunting-wizard; it is of no use to offer one obtained by honest means; it simply would be wasted. So the hunters stole a chicken, gave it to the fetish-

THE SQUIRREL'S CLEARING

man, and, full of expectations, went off on their expedition.

Before leaving the village, however, the hunters, headed by the wizard, danced round the village, singing magic songs. Then the hunting fetish was brought with awful blowing of horns to the biggest tree near the village, and set down at the foot of it. The wizard then threw some of the bark of the tree on the hunters' heads, and, with shouting and yelling, they started for the woods.

There the nets were soon spread; the chief assigned everyone his position, and when he had done so all the hunters clapped their hands three times. Then the dogs were let loose, the men shouted, the dogs yelped, boys blew ivory horns, and soon the whole party were driving lustily towards the nets.

The nets had been put up in a glade, and when the hunters arrived there they found that a squirrel had been caught — a squirrel, but nothing more. This place henceforth became to be known as "The Squirrel's Clearing."

Soon afterwards a huge leopard which had become old and stiff took up his residence in this clearing. "I am too old," he thought, "to hunt the swift antelope; I shall live in future on the fat goats which man keeps in the village near by." But when he had slaughtered his first goat the warriors sallied forth and killed him. Great was the joy of the villagers at the destruction of such a great and dangerous animal; they clustered round

THE SQUIRREL'S CLEARING

the carcass in admiration, and asked: "Where did you kill it?" The hunters replied: "We killed it in the squirrel's clearing."

Shortly afterwards an elephant made his home in the same place, and likewise fell a victim to the prowess of the local hunters. Crowds came from all the country-side to feast on the meat, and on their way inquired where the animal had been killed. Again was the answer, "In the squirrel's clearing."

Then the dead elephant mused to himself: "Why is this? Why do they name their clearing after a mere squirrel, when a fine beast like the leopard, and a noble animal like myself have been slain there?"

And man has since been always the same; once he has connected two ideas he cannot separate them any more. A man who considers another one his enemy will continue to consider him so, even if this other man shows him all possible kindness.

From this story a proverb has arisen. When a man is continually trying to fasten a quarrel upon one of his fellows, when he is always talking about him, saying, "So-and-so has done this and that, or So-and-so has said this and that," the latter will say, "Why have you my name always on your lips? Am I the squirrel's clearing?"

THE CHIEF'S REVENGE

THE CHIEF'S REVENGE

(BASONGE STORY)

ONCE upon a time there was a great chief who ruled over all the Basonge people. His name was Kilo Gwambele, and he was a mighty hunter. It was his habit to take the lead when his people went out in the pursuit of game; it was he who posted those hunters who owned nets and gave directions to those whose duty it was to drive the game with dogs into them. Although advanced in age he knew well how to whirl a spear, and his aim with bow and arrow was unerring.

One day, after a copious rain had fallen in the night, the chief summoned his people for a hunting party. There was a bustle in the village! The dogs were whistled for, bows were tested, spears sharpened, nets repaired, and the hunting horn sounded lustily. In Indian file the party started. When they had left the cultivated ground round the village the old experienced men were sent out to find the track of some game. They soon returned and reported a huge herd of water hogs in a swamp in the middle of a small wood. Kilo Gwambele ordered the nets to be spread on one side of a thicket, sent the men with the dogs to the opposite end of it; the rest of the men were divided into groups, each guarding one side of the wood. The yelping of the dogs speedily resounded, together with the noise made by the rattles attached to

THE CHIEF'S REVENGE

them; and suddenly a great number of wild pigs came rushing along at a furious rate straight for the chief.

The chief let them approach up to a few paces, and, selecting the biggest boar, laid him low with a well-aimed arrow. Drawing his knife he approached the big brute to finish it, when suddenly it got on its legs again and charged the chief. A young slave, seeing the danger his master was in, raised his bow and shot at the infuriated boar; but he missed it, and the arrow pierced the side of the chief, who fell down mortally wounded. A cry of horror escaped the lips of the onlookers, then all the men rushed at the luckless slave to kill him for his clumsiness. But the dying chief intervened and protected him with his own body. "Stop," he exclaimed, "throughout all my long life I have tried to be a just man; do you wish that my death should cause an injustice to be committed? This poor slave boy has killed me in trying to save my life, would you who stood by inactive when I was in danger be his judges?"

The men, lamenting loudly, carried their chief back to the village, and when night fell the dying man gave the slave goods and money, and then ordered his wife to help him to escape unobserved; and in this she was successful.

The next morning the chief was found dead in his house.

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